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VARANASI
AT THE CROSSROADS

Swami Medhasananda

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Varanasi, widely acclaimed as the 'Eternal City', is as old as history itself. Mention of 'Kashi' is found even in the Vedas, the oldest books of the world. Its holy shrines, the picturesque environs of the sacred river Ganga and with all, the City's long, unbroken traditions and comprehensive coverage of all aspects of human life have imparted to it a character which is unique. These elements are missing in many other ancient cities of the world and what little of them that does survive are in ruins.

In the Modern Age most cities in Asia have undergone tremendous changes – physical and otherwise – as a consequence of contact with the West. Naturally, the question arises: How did Varanasi stand the onslaught of Western Culture through British rule under which it passed in the late eighteenth century? Did it retain its traditional character without succumbing to this Western challenge? And, if so, to what extent? And with what consequences?

Varanasi is also regarded as the main seat of traditional Hindu culture and the religious headquarters of Hinduism. Are such claims justified?

An honest attempt to answer these queries and present a comprehensive account of the City within the timeframe of 1781 and 1857 has been made in this volume. Readers will also find interesting and important pieces of information, some of which were hitherto unknown, regarding the deities and temples, fairs and festivals, mahallas, markets and ghats, learning and literary pursuits, residents and visitors, and miscellaneous ideas and practices of this ancient City as we see them today.

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VARANASI at the Crossroads

A PANORAMIC VIEW OF EARLY MODERN VARANASI AND THE STORY OF ITS TRANSITION

Swami Medhasananda

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
INSTITUTE OF CULTURE
KOLKATA

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गंगातरंगरमणीयजटाकलापं
गौरीनिरन्तरविभूषितवामभागम्।
नारायणप्रियमनंगमदापहारं
वाराणसीपुरपतिं भज विश्वनाथम्॥

Gaṅgā-taraṅga-ramaṇīya-jaṭākalāpaṁ
Gaurī-nirantara-vibhūṣita-vāma-bhāgam;
Nārāyaṇa-priyam-anaṅga-madāpahāraṁ
Vārāṇasī-purapatiṁ, bhaja Viśvanātham.

Worship Viśvanātha Śiva, the Lord of Vārāṇasī,
Whose locks look charming with the ripples of the Gaṅgā.
Worship Śiva, who is ever adorned on His left by Gaurī;
Worship Śiva, who is beloved of Nārāyaṇa;
Worship Śiva, who is the destroyer of Cupid's pride.

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To
The Lotus Feet
of
The Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi
The Embodiment of Learning

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FOREWORD

Banaras has been a subject of study for the past two centuries in the form of sketches and paintings and/or writings. A corpus of published modern research work is available, still there is justification for the present work from several points of view. To begin with, the period under investigation, the focal area of Swami Medhasanandaji's present work, is a twilight area in the history of Banaras. Swamiji has handled his subject with a unique sense of involvement. This study, carried on for two decades or more, has assumed newer and more far-reaching dimensions. Like several other scholars, Swami Medhasanandaji was attracted and enchanted by this 'eternal city,' and he was encouraged by none else than the savant Mahamahopadhyay Pandit Gopinathji Kaviraj, who urged him to explore Banaras in both its macro and micro forms; Kaviraj-ji concluded that the present work should leave out nothing. It should be written without neglecting even those titbits that may seem unimportant and useless. The same concept is couched in the common parlance of Banaras as in the phrase, '*Kashi ke kankar sab Shiva Shankar*' (Even the pebbles of Banaras can be equated with Shiva Himself).

The present work is motivated by an inquiry into and an investigation of an age, the 'father' of our immediate past—which gave birth to the post-Mutiny culture and life-style of the present Benares. This is a relatively neglected area of Banaras's past. Moti Chandra offers a cursory study of this period through supplying certain useful documentary evidence. Diana Eck's work shows a unique combination of the vertical and horizontal supra-conscious development of Kashi. Kuber Nath Sukul's publication is more concerned with the history of religious institutions and landmarks of the City. Yet, for the most part, these two ends of the spectrum figuring in publications on Banaras stop with the advent of the 'Company Rule' in Banaras, or limit themselves to a few major events, usually basing their surmises on European sources (visual or textual).

There was a need for a deeper study of the period spanning the arrival of Warren Hastings on the scene and the 1857 War of Independence, fallaciously dubbed the 'Sepoy Mutiny'. The 'Company Period' was neglected by scholars as a period of gradual decay of Banaras, yet through

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Swami Medhasanandaji's present work, we are more than convinced that it was an extremely productive and important period in the City's history wherein the traditional values of life were poised face to face with an alien system and its civic, judicial and general administration. In the Eastern Indian sector Bengal, or more specifically Calcutta, was the first recipient of Western exposure and therefore obviously changes were taking place much more rapidly on the metropolitan scene. Banaras, which looked forward to this awakening in Bengal to some extent, was inspired by the changes, yet did not lose its enviable position in North India as the religious leader of the Hindus.

It is interesting to discover, through the following pages, the dichotomy of the absorption or non-absorption of certain ideas or an innate defiance of the foreign administration, and similarly, the colonial power's covert design to destroy time-honoured institutions like the role of *choudharies* in caste, vocation or guild and even the Mahalla systems by forcing upon Banaras their own 'alien' brand of judicial system, a system under which we are still victims through corruption and delays. With few exceptions, outbreaks by the citizens of Banaras were the result of genuine grievances; the interesting fact is that most of these were successfully led by relatively unknown faces, though instances of influential people's backing can be read between the lines.

The present work assumes a newer dimension as the author has simultaneously drawn copiously upon Indian sources of those times, usually neglected by other authors. Fortunately, we have an impressive mass of material by writers like Jadunath Sarvadhikari's *Tirtha-Bhramana* in Bengali and Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal's *Kashi Parikrama*, also in Bengali, in which the list of ghats has been compared with James Prinsep's map of Banaras of 1822 or Box's map of Banaras of 1868. Similarly, there was a Bengali Journal, *Kashivartaprakashika*, the Kashi special number of the Hindi literary journal, *Hamsa*, and Shri Shrinath Shah's *Shah Vamshavali* in Hindi. In many ways these and similar sources supplement the evidence already known to us. They offer a fuller picture or even at times contradict certain projections found in British travellers' accounts. These and government records (e.g., the East India Company correspondences), Nineteenth Century Maps of Banaras, Banaras Division records, pre-Mutiny records, etc., were rummaged through by the author who found that evil practices like infanticide, rampant in Banaras, were stopped by law in the face of social resistance. Similarly, the author

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presents a richer account of the non-eradication of the practice of ending one's life by drowning in the Ganga or throwing oneself onto a blade. We also find in those days the practice of people aspiring to Brahminhood in which the Pandits exercised their judiciousness in allowing or disallowing the application, or, in parallel instances, their verdicts on permission to perform *sati*.

Expansion of the City was due to various factors, including public easements, such as the opening of new thoroughfares or the introduction of new drainage systems; such developments were met with partial resistance or acceptance. While these contributed to the evolution of present-day Banaras demography, changes were in the air. Concerning many such developments, contemporary records are of great value to us. Information supplied by Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal, Bholanauth Chunder, Jadunath or Niranjan Mukherjee, receiving scant attention of scholars thus far, is used copiously here. They offer first-hand records and present more accurate pictures where these situations were glossed over by writers like Emma Roberts or Rev. M. H. Sherring.

An inquiry of the above nature, in which the changing personality of Banaras was getting the upper hand and the 'eternity' of the City was never lost sight of, is not a minor issue or a simple challenge. It goes to the credit of Medhasanandaji that these 'eternal' values of Banaras during that period of social crisis and political upheaval are never lost. Sometimes we begin to feel, going through his text, that Banaras was a window (and to an extent it continues to be so) to look at the Hindu world, at least in its Upper Indian context.

Yet Swamiji has rightly credited Banaras with initiating public protest during early British rule of India; this might be due to a true Varanasi's resilient character. This again might be a major factor behind Banaras's ability to revive itself time and again while preserving its 'eternity'.

Swamiji's untiring efforts in going through government records, such as the Calendar of Persian Correspondences, Papers of the Foreign Department, Papers of the Revenue Department, Papers of the Judicial Department, Papers of the Political Department, Minutes of the Committee for Local Improvement, the Duncan Records, Residence Records, etc., etc., or such obscure publications as the History of Sanskrit College, give us a more detailed and accurate account of the foundation and early growth of such institutions in the City. Then there is a history of the 'Blind Asylum'. The list can never be completed, yet this serves as a

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guideline for future researchers. Further, this type of mosaiced information creates a holistic picture of the City. Similar instances can be found in the history of the ghats and the involvement of their donors. Many of these were princely patrons or men or women of high standing, nevertheless there are several other names, obscured by the passage of time, such as Bachchharaj Ghat (now Anandmoyee Ghat).

Reference to Bachchharaj-ji reminds us of the economic history towards the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century to which the trading house of Bachchharaj belonged and its rise and fall. Bachchharaj-ji's dedication to Jainism, his faith, prompted him to donate a ghat at that holy spot. There are many other social factors behind these and similar developments. Concentration of the trading class near the Naya Ghat, where the Bachchharaj-ji's banking house stood, was due to river-borne trade. This led to Gola Galli, another concentration of banker/traders, and finally, to 'Shao ka Mohalla'—the quarter of the Shah Family, at that time the biggest traders and bankers, who presided over the Bhairo Bazar, now Chowkhamba and Thatheri Galli. The Bhairo Bazar centre must have had a phatak named after Bhair-Bhairoji of which no mention is available. Due to the landing of ferry boats at the Naya Ghat, the Peshwa family felt it expedient to dedicate the Ganesha Mandir and the adjoining ghat.

Similar is the story of Gay Ghat. Gay Ghat was a necessary adjunct to a river or a water pond, a ramp for pack animal to carry cargo (compare Ghoḍa Ghat which was similarly a *kachcha ghat* till recently). In the case of the 'Balaji' Temple (i.e., Lakshman Bala Temple near Mangala Guari Ghat) rungs of the steps there with a very low rise still in site formed a similar ramp. Later on, an effigy of a cow was installed at Gay Ghat, which was a misnomer. These are understandable examples of 'popular' histories. The author has taken great pains to glean through these assorted bits of information and come to objective and convincing surmises.

The chapter on Art and Music is of great value to us since so little connected and documented history is available in these areas. Further, the author had to depend primarily on secondary sources, although he has tapped some old references from published material. The oral traditions known from the houses of musicians are extremely important, but the modern Banarasis seem to have partly forgotten the role of migrating court musicians from different parts of the country, especially in the retinues of princes who were interned in this City under the Company Rule. Most of

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these details will never come to light due to the absence of recorded history, but the role of Senia maestros and the patronage of Banaras gentry under the leadership of the Maharajas of Banaras turned the City into one of the most important centres of classical Indian music. Descendants of Tansen, the 'Senias' were the leading figures. Maharashtrian Brahmin singers of the highest calibre made Banaras their home. Many amateurs, often reaching the level of these maestros, illuminated the City even till as late as the first half of the twentieth century. These along with the history of painting and stage-craft has made the present work highly valuable to us.

We are confident that this book will continue to serve as a beacon light to future researchers on Banaras, as it is a source of great delight and inspiration to us—the Banarasis. We cannot thank Swami Medhasanandaji enough for this highly scientific yet interesting research work. Surely it will always be a rewarding experience for the reader.

Prof. (Dr) Rai Anand Krishna
Formerly Head,
Department of History of Art, and
Formerly Joint Director,
Bharat Kala Bhavan Museum, Banaras Hindu University.

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First of all, I am extremely grateful to the late Professor Amales Tripathi, former Head of the Department of History, Calcutta University, a renowned historian and also my teacher, for initiating me into research on Varanasi.

I also respectfully remember the late Swami Tejasanandaji, the first Principal (also my Principal) of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, a reputed residential degree college in West Bengal and the late Swami Bhaswaranandaji, former Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Varanasi, for their blessings and help in making accommodations for me at the Mission-Centre in Varanasi on a number of occasions to undertake fieldwork there. Later, the revered Swami Sattwanandaji, who succeeded Swami Bhaswaranandaji, and Swami Suddhavratanandaji, the present Secretary, also kindly accommodated me a number of times in the Sevashrama for the same purpose.

In Varanasi, among the innumerable people who were of great help to me, I especially recall with love, respect and gratefulness the late Rai Krishnadas, Founder and Director of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University, and his son, Professor Rai Anand Krishna, the former Head of the Department of History of Art at B.H.U., the late Ramesh Chandra Dey, Private Secretary to His Highness Maharaja Dr Vibhutinarain Singh of Varanasi and Sri Vishwanath Mukherjee, the famous Hindi writer.

All of these people always received me with great love, encouraged me in my studies, spared hours of their time over several days to discuss various issues I raised, furnished me with valuable pieces of information, and in fact, guided me at nearly every step of the initial stage of my fieldwork in Varanasi. Such guidance was especially important to me, as I had practically no idea of the City before my first research visit in 1969.

There is another reason for my being especially grateful to Prof. Anand Krishna. In addition to kindly going over my manuscript and offering valuable suggestions, he was also kind enough to write a detailed and thoughtful foreword for this book. With his academic and cultural attainment, and above all, his long association with Varanasi as a member of a highly cultured and traditional Varanasi family, he is surely one of the most appropriate persons to write a foreword for a book on Varanasi.

I also met and received guidance from the late Dr Moti Chandra, a famous authority on the history of Varanasi, and the late Pandits Kuber Nath Sukul and Banarasilal Gupta, all of whom belonged to Varanasi and authored books on it.

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Other distinguished Banarasis, whom I fondly and respectfully remember for their kind inspiration and assistance, are as follows: His Highness Vibhutinarain Singh, Maharaja of Varanasi, Pandit Rajeshwar Shastri Dravid, Prof. Hiralal Singh, Dr Ramlochan Singh, Prof. Siddheshwar Bhattacharya, Prof. Vishwanath Bhattacharya, Prof. M. Isharat, Prof. Abdul Zahir and Prof. Shameen Akhtar of Banaras Hindu University, Pandit Bibhuti Bhattacharya, Pandit Taraknath Bhattacharya, Pandit Baladeo Upadhyay and Narayan Datta Kalekar of Sanskrit University; Sri Ahibhushan Bhattacharya, Sri Asutosh Bhattacharya, Sri Shailesh De, Sri Suresh Chandra Chakravorti, Editor of the *Uttara*, Sri Uday Saroj Shah of the Shah family, Babu Ramkrishna, Prof. Shivaprasad Mishra Rudra, Sri Mohanlal Gupta of the *Aaj*, Dr Bhanushankar Mehta, Pandit Rambalak Shastri, Pandit Ramshankar Tripathi, Mahant of the Vishwanatha Temple, Sri Chimanlal Goswami, Mahant of the Jnanavapi Temple, Sri Virendra Dikshit of Trailanga Math, Sri Anjaninandan Mishra, Sri Prabhas Chandra Chatterjee of Gurudham, Reverend R. C. Das, Jagat Singh Majithia, Sri Rohit Mehta, Muhammad Ishaq, Dr Vaidyanath Saraswati, Sri Hiralal Bapuli, Sri Ajit Kumar Bapuli, Sri Ramendranath Mukhopadhyay, Smt. Sabita Sharma and Mr Ronald Amend, a visiting American scholar who has become one of my best friends.

I am also especially grateful to the late Ramcharan Chakravorti of Varanasi, former Headmaster of Jaynarayan High School during the period of 1930-1946, who while bedridden during his last illness, allowed me to consult old school documents he had been preserving as valuable assets for quite some time in hopes that someone would come along to properly utilize them.

I am thankful to the late Babu Devinarayan, Advocate, who kindly allowed me to have access to his private archive and Tapan Kumar Ghosh, freelance writer, who provided me with some valuable pieces of information on Bengalee settlement in Varanasi. Md Baidulla Ansari, son of the late and celebrated Md Abdur Rashid Ansari, became my personal friend and kindly guided me in my research on the Muslims of Varanasi. Maulavi Abdus Salam Nomani was also kind enough to help in the same subject.

Swami Amritanandaji (not of the Ramakrishna Order), and Swami Brahmeshanandaji kindly went through the chapter on public health in this book and offered useful suggestions. Many other monks of the

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Ramakrishna Centres of Varanasi were also a great help to me in various ways. I also want to thank Gopal Chandra Das and his family for all their assistance. Prof. Devidas Nanda of B.H.U. and my college-day friend, and his family were always a big support to me during my long and arduous field study in the City.

Thanks are also due to the following scholars living in and around Calcutta for their valued assistance and suggestions with regard to some of the chapters herein including, Prof. Dhiresh Bhattacharya, former Head of the Department of Economics, Calcutta University, Prof. Lakshman Chandra Mandal, Jadavpur University, and especially, Prof. Sujit Kumar Ghosh, Reader, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira for the chapter on economy, Prof. Suprakash Sanyal, Calcutta University, Prof. Upendranarayan Chakravorti, my teacher and former Head of the Department of History at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, for various chapters and Sri Jyotibhushan Chaki for the chapter on culture.

Prof. Nishith Ranjan Ray, expert on the history of Calcutta, my teacher and former Director, Institute of Historical Studies, Calcutta and Prof. Govinda Gopal Mukhopadhyay, former Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Burdwan University, who also has a long association with Varanasi, offered many valuable suggestions. Pandit Srimohan Bhattacharya, Sri Nachiketa Bharadwaj, Sri Nimai Mukherjee and Dr Muhammad R. Shibli, all of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, Dr Asoke Basu of Berkeley and Vasudeo Pandya of Chicago also helped in various ways. Assistance offered by Sri Arun Kumar Lahiri, editor of the *Vishuddha Siddhanta* almanac, Sri K. K. Chakravorty, Director, Positional Astronomy Centre, Calcutta, and Dr Ganesh Matkar of Pune, in determining the corresponding English dates (Gregorian Calendar) of a few important Indian Calendar dates referred to in this book is also gratefully acknowledged.

I am immensely grateful to Dr R. C. Majumdar, the great historian, Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji, the National Professor of India and scholar extra-ordinary, and Prof. Sarasi Kumar Saraswati, the reputed historian of Indian art and architecture—all since deceased—whom I had met a number of times and was highly benefitted by discussing my topic with them.

A host of foreign scholars and institutes were contacted in connection with my study, especially, regarding accounts of Varanasi from foreign travellers. I recall with profound gratefulness those scholars who obliged

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me by furnishing relevant data and encouragement. First and foremost among these is Professor Bernard S. Cohn of Chicago University who has written scholastic articles on some aspects of Varanasi. Prof. Cohn very kindly sent detailed observations regarding my research project, which contained many useful suggestions, as early as 1971.

The names of the other foreign scholars referred to above include, Prof. Hajime Nakamura of Japan, Mr Giuseppe Tucci of Italy, Dr Miltiades A. Spyrou and Mr John Manetta of Greece, Dr V. Moeller and Prof. Claus Vogel of Germany, Prof. Eugeniusz Sluszkiewicz and Prof. Christopher Bryski of Poland, who kindly sent a photocopy of Count Wladyslaw Malachowski's account of Varanasi, Mrs Beatrice Pelissier of the Centre for South Asian Studies in Social Science and Ms Elisabeth Vermier of the Bibliotheque Nationale of France.

I also had correspondence with a number of Indian scholars on the accounts of travellers to Varanasi written in various Indian languages. In this regard, I recall with sincere thanks the following:

Dr V. Gopalkrishniah, Director Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Manuscript Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad, Prof. G. N. Reddi, S.V. University, Tirupati, Prof. S. V. Joga Rao, Andhra University, Dr G. S. Sivarudrappa, Director, Centre of Kannanda Studies, Bangalore University, Dr G. K. Bhat, Director, Post Graduate and Research Department, Bhandarkar O. R. Institute, Poona, and Prof. Ramakanta Pathak, P. G. Department of Hindi, Dwarbhanga University, Bihar.

I also want to thank the authorities and staff of the many libraries, archives and museums, which I personally visited, for their kind co-operation and assistance in my studies.

These include the Sampurnananda Sanskrit University Library, Banaras Hindu University Library, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Carmichael Library, Nagari Pracharini Sabha Library, Bangiya Sahitya Samaj Library, Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama and Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama Libraries, Goenka Library, Vijaykrishna Math Library, Abhimanyu Pustakalaya and the Court Archives in Varanasi, the Ramnagar Fort Library and American Centre Library in Ramnagar, the U. P. Government Archives and Public Library in Allahabad, the National Archives and Nehru Museum Library in New Delhi, the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies Library in Simla, Khudabaksh Library in Patna, the National Library, Asiatic Society Library, Calcutta University Library, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Library, Sanskrit College Library,

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Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture Library, Advaita Ashrama Library and the West Bengal Government Archives in Calcutta, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Headquarters Library and Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira Library in Belur, the Public Library in Uttarpara, the French Institute Library in Chandannagar, the British Museum Library and India Office Library in London, California University Library, Berkeley, Chicago University Library, the City Library in Zushi and the National Diet Library in Tokyo.

I am also grateful to Prof. P. Lal, Prof. Amiya Maiti, Prof. K. D. Paliwal, Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centre and the Max Müller Bhavan of Calcutta for rendering me great service in translating some materials on Varanasi from different languages into English.

It is also my pleasant duty to acknowledge my special debt to my students of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, West Bengal, which I had served from 1973 until 1993, and my brother-monks of the Ramakrishna Order, more especially, Revered Swami Smarananandaji, the present General Secretary of the Order, who helped me in various ways and inspired me by constantly inquiring about the progress of my research and the publication of the results. Another great source of inspiration to me was my teacher, the late Prof. Sailendra Nath Dhar, a reputed historian and biographer of Swami Vivekananda.

I am grateful in a very special sense to Dr Samarendra Nath Bardhan, formerly Honorary Professor of English at the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira for editing this work at its early stages, and also Mrs Susan Walters of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, for the second editing. Editing such a voluminous work is a painstaking job and they did that job out of love for which I owe them greatly.

I also want to thank the devotees of the Vedanta Society of Japan for their various assistance in the final stage of this publication. Among them I would like to mention especially the names of Sakae Machida, Kohei Ikeo, Haruki Kanai, Masashi Ohgami, Ashis Gupta, Michio Suzuki, who prepared the maps and designed the cover for this book, Lonnie Hirsch, who offered many valuable suggestions, did the final editing and spared no pains in improving the quality of the book, and Enrico Colombo, who also helped in various other ways, including some typing and proof-reading works. Prof. Tsuyoshi Nara of Seisen University, Tokyo, a close friend and well-wisher of the Vedanta Society, helped me in studying some of the

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Japanese materials. Prof. Sandip Kumar Tagore, a distinguished writer and musician, and a long-time resident of Japan prepared the explanatory notes on Indian classical music. Various kinds of assistance, offered by Noriko Satoh, are inestimable and these include ferreting out some rare Japanese documents, and explaining them to me.

Thanks are also due to Sri Arun Agarwal, for the cover photograph, and Sri Ashis Chatterjee, Librarian of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, who prepared the most part of the glossary. Due to the non-availability of computers during the initial stages of writing, Sunil Kumar Mukherjee took great pains in typing the whole manuscript a number of times and deserves special credit and thanks. Without his diligent labour, this work would have never been published.

I am also grateful to the publishers whose publications have been of immense help to me in writing this book, and from whose publications, excerpts have been quoted.

It must be obvious by now that preparation of this manuscript, which involved long periods of fieldwork, visits to various libraries and academic bodies, correspondence with a host of scholars, purchase of books, typing and other obvious contingencies, required substantial funding. In this connection, I gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance I received from the University Grants Commission of the Government of India on two occasions. The first was in 1978 under the auspices of Financial Assistance to Teachers for Research and Learned Work in Humanities and Social Sciences and the second was in 1987 under The University Level Book Production Scheme. This work was also financially supported by the Ramakrishna Mission Tattwamandira, Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Mr Chiranjib Sarkar of the U.S.A. and the late Dr Anath Bandhu Roy of Baduria, West Bengal.

Sri Shivaram Datta, a veteran photographer took most of the photos used herein. I am also grateful to the Bharat Kala Bhavan and The American Institute of Ramnagar for granting permission to use some photos from their collections.

I am immensely obliged to Prof. Nemai Sadhan Bose, Prof. Sengaku Mayeda and Prof. Huston Smith—all internationally known scholars—for kindly going through a large portion of the book and writing the comments that have been quoted on the back of the book jacket.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the late Revered Swami Lokeswaranandaji, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of

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CHAPTER I

VARANASI THROUGH THE AGES

THE CITY AT FIRST SIGHT

Varanasi epitomizes all that is India. Through all that has befallen her, she continues to thrive as the chief centre of religious and cultural traditions of this ancient land. This colourful City, with its mystical ethos and majestic riverfront, has long captivated and enthralled visitors at first sight.

Here is one such description by a traveller :

> 'The City is situated on a high semi-circular bank, and reaches down to the water's edge. Mosques, pagodas, temples, houses of different sorts, long flights of steps leading to places of worship—the river, magnificently extended, the stream rapid—the opposite shore beautiful—in short nothing can be more striking and imposing than the first view of Benares. All the buildings are of stone and seem likely to stand the ravages of time.... The tridents and crescents, on the tops of the different Hindoo and Mussulman temples, are all of brass, or gilt, and in the sun make a magnificent appearance.... The multitudes of people, bathing or praying give a most indescribable effect.'[1]

Here is another account of the glory and greatness of the City as presented by Sister Nivedita, one of the greatest exponents of Indian culture:

> 'As the new-comer is rowed down the river (Ganga), past the long line of temples and bathing *ghats*, while the history of each is told to him in turn, he feels, catching his breath at each fresh revelation of builded beauty, that all roads in India must always have led to Benares.'[2]

The City is so full of places of historical interest that at almost every step along the way a knowledgeable guide may stop an inquisitive visitor to describe for instance, '... here the Ashwamedha Yajna was performed in the remote past ... and over here once stood the imposing temples of Vishwanatha and Bindumadhava.'

'These are the places,' our guide might continue his narration, 'where Parshvanath, the twenty-third Jaina Tirthankar was born; where Tulsidas, immersed in meditation on Rama, composed the *Ramacharitmanas*; where Kabir sang his famous *sakhis*; where Guru Nanak lived as a wandering monk; where Sri Ramakrishna met Trailanga Swami during his pilgrimage; where

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Raja Chet Singh lived and challenged the British; where Bharatendu Harishchandra produced his literary masterpieces; and where Sheikh Ali Hazi, the renowned saint and poet from Persia, slept—never to rise again.'

Perhaps then our learned escort would peer into the past through the mind's eye, as it were, and narrate in a low mellow voice, 'These may be the very lanes traversed in turn by Gautama Buddha, Shankaracharya, Ramanuja, Ramananda, Sri Ramakrishna and other religious leaders ... and overlooking the Ganga, these are the ghats that once reverberated with the resonance of their soul-stirring sermons.'

So it is that almost every temple, every monastery, every house, every lane and every ghat of any antiquity in Varanasi is pregnant with precious history. Each one is associated with the hallowed and loving memories of a saint, a scholar, an aristocrat, or an artiste. Each one has innumerable stories to tell; but so few have been told so far. They lie just hidden from view, eager to be discovered, to divulge their treasures of the ages to the seeker. So it is always worthwhile for such seekers to roam meditatively through the narrow, mysterious and whispering lanes of the City, bordered by grey, time-worn mansions, oblivious to the squalor and clamour around them. To do so is a thrilling and unforgettable experience, one which can hardly be evoked from any city other than Varanasi.

The ancient scriptures of the Hindus have eulogized Varanasi in terms that one could not imagine with regard to a mere city. They have proclaimed again and again that Varanasi stands in comparison with no other–either in this world or in worlds beyond—न तादृशं हि गगने, न भूम्यां, न रसातले[3]।

Varanasi having evolved in the pre-Christian era was first referred to in the Vedas and Upanishads.[4] Through the centuries, with its pluralistic character, this 'Golden City' has drawn multitudes of people from far and near. Some have been enchanted by her majestic beauty and cultural richness, others by her material prosperity, and many, of course, have been moved by her religious appeal. Devout Hindus believe that the City has a transcendental character and that both living and dying here is a matter of great fortune. According to Hindu scriptures,[5] death in Kashi assures one of emancipation from the painful cycle of birth and death and passing one's last days and, especially, to take one's last breath on the holy ground of Kashi is a cherished dream; काश्याम् मरणम् मुक्तिः।

VARANASI NOW

One may think from various descriptions of its countless old monuments

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that the City is simply living in the past, but this would be a mistake as it is very much alive and vibrant in the present as well. This is evident from the following facts concerning modern-day Varanasi :

Varanasi is the headquarters of Varanasi district and Varanasi division. It is 79.06 square kilometres in area with a population of 13,02,250 according to the 2001 census. People of all descriptions from India and abroad may be found in its crowded streets. The common tongue of the local people is the Varanasi version of Western Bhojpuri, while Khadiboli is also used for official purposes, business and publications.* Other languages, such as Urdu and Bengali, in particular, are also quite common in Muslim and Bengalee neighbourhoods. Varanasi has under its jurisdiction a municipality incorporating 91 wards. New buildings and new streets have been constructed, especially in the outskirts, giving it a modern look; yet the age-old mansions with their countless narrow lanes and by-lanes still preserve Varanasi's appearance of antiquity.

Varanasi is connected with the rest of the world through a vast network of river-traffic, highways, railways and air services. In addition to these connections to far off places, the vast hinterland is also linked for the import of necessary provisions and merchandise and export of the City's products to the rest of the country and abroad.

Varanasi enjoys a magnificent religious mix consisting of innumerable places of worship and monasteries. Devotees of almost all major religious faiths of the world, such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism can be found here. Its educational spectrum is also notable with four universities and many colleges, high schools, primary schools, traditional seminaries of classical learning and public libraries.

The cultural character of the City has various dimensions with numerous fairs and festivals throughout the year with large numbers of musicians and artistes devoted to instrumental and vocal music and dance and with elaborate arrangements of food and drink, sports and other pastimes. The print media is prolific, with newspapers and journals of different languages, especially Hindi and English, published regularly. Publication of scholastic works in various branches of literature, science and technology and fine arts in different languages has also added to the City's glory and lustre. Public services like sewerage and sanitation, health-centres, hospitals and nursing homes with

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* Certain sectors of the population, e.g., the Agarwal community, use a local version of Awadhi.

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physicians of both Eastern and Western schools of medicine, water works, electricity, post offices and telecommunication services are all available in Varanasi.

Both large- and small-scale industries, cottage industries, banking services, large and small market-places and countless shops offering all manner of merchandise are to be found—almost everything that any modern city provides.

Law and order is maintained by police stations located throughout the City and there is also a military base, or cantonment, on the outskirts.

This, in short, is an outline of modern Varanasi, a city that may appear like any other modern metropolis. It may, however, induce the reader to ask why then has this City been described as 'Swarna (golden) Kashi',[6] or why has it been held in such sacred and high esteem by the Hindus?

UNIQUENESS OF VARANASI

The fundamental difference between this and other modern cities, both in character and in tradition, will, however, become evident to anyone who carefully studies Varanasi's history and observes the daily life here with a positive and reverential attitude. Only then can one be convinced that here is a city with a unique ethos.

As it had been in the past, the greatness of Varanasi has also been recognized by the spiritual luminaries of modern India like Sri Ramakrishna* and Swami Vivekananda,[7] as well as such illustrious champions of Indian culture as Rabindranath Tagore.[8] Rabindranath remarked on one occasion:

> In the Western continent we find that Paris is the intellectual heartland of France, Rome of Italy and Athens of ancient Greece. Likewise in the history of Hindu India we find that the streams of all centres of learning that developed in places distant from Kashi had always, on some occasion or other, conjoined in Kashi. In fact, Kashi does not belong to any Indian province in particular, it belongs to all the provinces of India.... The chief function of all the places of pilgrimage of India is to see that people of all provinces may feel there the presence of a soul greater than their own. It is at these places of pilgrimage where the great unity of the entire Hindu India can clearly be realized. The special feature of Kashi, as distinct from those of Puri and other places of pilgrimage, is that it is not only a place where streams of devotion have met, but it is also a place where all the different branches of Indian learning have united.**

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* See Chapter VI of the present book.

** 'পশ্চিম মহাদেশে আমরা দেখতে পাই যে ফ্রান্সের চিত্তের কেন্দ্রভূমি প্যারিস, ইতালীর রোম ও প্রাচীন গ্রীসের এথেন্স। হিন্দু ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসেও তেমনি দূরে দূরে যত বিদ্যার উৎস উৎসারিত হয়েছে তার ধারা সর্বদাই কোন না কোন উপলক্ষে কাশীতে এসে মিলিত হয়েছে। কাশী বস্তুতঃ ভারতবর্ষের কোন বিশেষ প্রদেশভুক্ত নয়, কাশী ভারতবর্ষের

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Even among Muslims, who held no special regard for Varanasi, there were those whom the City fascinated. Sheikh Ali Hazi, the great saint-poet of Persia, who migrated here around 1750, and Mirza Ghalib, the celebrated poet of Urdu who visited in 1827 from Delhi, were enchanted by the beauty of Varanasi and recognized its greatness. Ali Hazi composed the following Persian couplet in appreciation of the City.

अज बनारस न रवन माबदे आम अस्त इंजा;
बगंगा गुस्ल कुनन्द व बसंग पा मलून्द ....
ज़हे रफअते संग व ज़हे तन लताफते गंगा ।*

'I shall not leave Banaras ... it is a place of prayer for all.
... They bathe in the Ganga and rub their feet on its stones. ...
... How exalted the stone ... how exalted the body
For coming in contact with the Holy Ganga.'

Mirza Ghalib's tribute to the City in Urdu is equally remarkable. Ghalib writes:

त आला बनारस चशमे बद दूर,
बहिश्त खुररम व फिरदौसे मामूर ।
इबादत खानाए नाकुशियाँ अस्त्,
हुमाना काबाए हिन्दोस्तां अस्त् ।**

'May God shield Banaras from evil eyes...
This mirthful heaven ... this Garden of Eden
This place of worship for the conch-shell blowers ....
Nay, this is Kaaba of India.'

There is also no dearth of Western scholars who, despite their totally different backgrounds, have succeeded to a considerable extent in identifying the singularity of Varanasi. Rev. M. A. Sherring, a scholar and member of the London Missionary Society, who lived here for many years around the

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সকল প্রদেশের। ... ভারতবর্ষের যে সকল তীর্থস্থান আছে তার সর্বপ্রধান কাজই হচ্ছে এই যে, সেখানে যাতে সকল প্রদেশের লোক আপন সত্তার চেয়ে বড় সত্তাকে উপলব্ধি করে। সমস্ত হিন্দু ভারতবর্ষের যে একটি বিরাট ঐক্য আছে সেটি প্রত্যক্ষ অনুভব করবার স্থান হচ্ছে এই সব তীর্থ। পুরী প্রভৃতি অন্যান্য তীর্থের চেয়ে কাশীর বিশেষত্ব এই যে এখানে যে কেবল ভক্তিধারার সঙ্গম স্থান তা নয়, এখানে ভারতীয় সমস্ত বিদ্যার মিলন হয়েছে।'

Rabindranath Tagore's address in the Bangiya Sahitya Sammelan at Varanasi on 20 Phalgun 1329 B.S., Quoted in Suresh Chakravarti,ed., *Sanchita*, a Bengali Magazine, Vaishakh—Asharh, 1375 B.S.

* Banarasilal Pandey, *Maharaj Balwant Singh aur Kashi ka Atit*, p. 56.

** *Ibid.*, p. 217.

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mid-nineteenth century and observed the City with the critical eye of a Christian Missionary, writes:

> 'Not only is Benares remarkable for her venerable age, but also for the vitality and vigour which, so far as we know, she has constantly exhibited. While many cities and nations have fallen into decay and perished, her sun has never gone down; on the contrary, for long ages past it had shone with almost meridian splendour....
>
> And now after the lapses of so many ages, this magnificent City still maintains most of the freshness, and all the beauty of her early youth.... Calcutta, Madras and Bombay are commercial centres of India, directing to a large extent, the trade of the country. But they do not speak to the masses.... Benares is the living oracle of the nation, and governs the Hindu with despotic hands, in all his sacred rites and practices.'[9]

The most striking features of this City, in contrast with other ancient cities of the world like Peking, Jerusalem, Mecca, Athens and Rome, are its comprehensive coverage of human life and its unbroken continuity. Varanasi offers a pattern of life providing scope to all aspects of human life; *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*; and this pattern of life, which thrived here at the dawn of human civilization, is still thriving.

The Hindus' tremendous reverence and fascination for this holy City is illustrated by the following Hindu marriage custom of South India. As part of the marriage ceremony, the bridegroom supposedly sets out on a pilgrimage to Kashi. Yet, as he passes the outskirts of the village and turns to the north his future father-in-law awaits and persuades him to turn back with the proposal to give his daughter to him in wedlock. The bridegroom accepts this proposal and returns to the village. This custom, which was observed by a French traveller named J. A. Dubois at the time of his stay in India between 1792 and 1832, continues to this day in some places.[10]

There are at least three other cities, Uttar Kashi in the Himalayas and Dakshin Kashi and Shiva Kashi in South India, which have adopted the name Kashi.

NAMES

The City has been known by various names throughout its long history, but the oldest and most common of these are still Varanasi and Kashi. In the remote past, it was generally held that Kashi and Varanasi had different connotations.[11] While Kashi was the name of the kingdom, Varanasi was its capital, as we find during the age of Shoḍasha Mahajanapada. In the present day the names Kashi and Varanasi are interchangeable.

According to one school, the name Varanasi originated from its location between Varuna and Nashi, which was later called Asi. Another suggests

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that the City took its name from the Varuna River, which was formerly called Varunasi or Varanasi.[12] In the absence of definite historical documents, it is impossible to ascertain the facts today. Nevertheless, most people subscribe to the view that Varanasi derived its name from Varuna and Asi. But even the name *Varanasi* had different versions at different periods and in different places. While the Chinese corruptions of Varanasi are *Pho-lo-nai* and *Po-lo-nisse*, as set by Fa Hien and Hiuen Tsang respectively,[13] the Muslim name from the time of their occupation of the City was *Banaras*, which continues today. *Benares* is the British variation that has been handed down to the present generation and is still frequently used by many.

According to some, Kashi comes from Kasha, the name of an ancient Hindu King who ruled the City. Others believe that the name simply comes from a kind of tall grass, *kasha*, which once grew abundantly along the riverbank. Then again, according to the *Kashi Khandam*, the name has been derived from the Sanskrit root '*kash*', meaning 'to shine', 'to look brilliant' or 'beautiful'. Hence Kashi, or what is sometimes called Kashika, is a place where the light, signifying Shiva himself, shines. This City of Light then is essentially 'the city of the enlightenment which liberates souls.'[14]

Varanasi has also been called by various other names in the Hindu scriptures, e.g., Avimukta (the never-forsaken), the Anandavana (the forest of bliss), Rudravasa (the City of Shiva), Mahashmashana (the great cremation ground) and Jitwari (a place where business is highly profitable).[15]

The *Jatakas* also record various names for the City including Surundhana, Sudarshana, Brahmavardhana, Pushpavati, Rammanagar, Molini and others.[16]

The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb changed the name to Muhammadabad and also set up a mint from which coins were issued with the intent to disgrace both Hinduism and this centre of Hinduism.[17] This new name remained confined to government documents, however, and this too only for a short time–till the demise of Aurangzeb.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

Sources for the early history of the City are mainly literary. We have already mentioned that references to Varanasi and Kashi first appear in Vedic literature and also in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Jain literature also has various references to the City, while references to it in the Buddhist *Jatakas*, written in Pali, are abundant. Yet, it is *Pauranik* literature that has given special importance to holy places like Kashi, wherein separate monographs on Kashi are written. But one must use literary sources very

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cautiously and in a discriminating way for the purpose of history. The obvious reason is that the Puranas are a mixture of myth and reality.* Coins, inscriptions, monuments, architecture and relics that have been discovered in Raj Ghat, Saranath and elsewhere are often more reliable sources for an ancient history of Varanasi.

In addition to Sanskrit and Persian literature, official records and correspondence are important for the medieval history of the City, while a corpora of Government records and various other publications in Indian and European languages are valuable as source material for a modern history. Travel accounts left by ancient, medieval and modern travellers from within the country and abroad are additional sources of information. For example, the travel accounts of Fa Hien (5th century) and Hiuen Tsang (7th century) of China, Al-Biruni (11th century) of Arabia, Ralph Fitch (16th century) and Reginald Heber (19th century) of England, Jean Baptiste Tavernier (17th century) and Francois Bernier (17th century) of France, Nicola Manucci (17th century) of Italy, Malachowski (19th century) of Poland, John B. Ireland (19th century) and Mark Twain (19th century) of America, and Vijayram Sen (18th century) and Enugula Veeraswamy (19th century) of India throw light on the Varanasi of their respective times. The records preserved by the City's *pandas*, pandits, *rais* and hereditary bankers are also valuable for this study.

PERIODS

Conventionally and politically, the history of India has been divided into four major divisions, namely Pre-historic, Hindu, Muslim and British. From the point of view of time, however, these categories are now justifiably termed Pre-historic, Ancient, Medieval and Modern. For our purpose, since the history of Varanasi deals more with religion and culture than politics, the following divisions would perhaps be more appropriate for a better appreciation of the City's history; (1) The Pre-Vedic Age, (2) The Vedic Age, (3) The Age of Jaina and Buddhist Influence, (4) The Puranic Age, (5) The Age of Reformation, (6) The Age of Ascendancy, (7) The Age of Struggle for Existence, (8) The Age of Hindu Revivalism and (9) The Age of the Western Challenge.[18] These milestones of great cultural and religious significance in the setting of political events have been outlined briefly below.

* Works of Sanskrit scholars for example, Bhatta Lakshmidhara's *Tirtha Vivechana Khanda* (12th century), Damodar Sharma's *Ukti Vyakti Prakarana* (12th century) and Krishna Mishra's *Prabodha Chandrodaya* (14th century) are important sources of Varanasi's socio-cultural and religious history.

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THE PRE-VEDIC AGE

Opinions of Indologists differ as to whether the Aryans migrated to India from outside or were the original inhabitants of this land, with the latter view gaining more support in recent years.[19] Whatever the facts may be, Aryans spread into different parts of the country, some of which were already inhabited by Dravidians, Austroloids and other indigenous peoples. It is speculated that a branch of Aryans followed the Ganga-Yamuna tract and proceeded to the south-east. Finally, they reached a place with a beautiful landscape; a ridge with a big river flowing to the east of it, and a large, open grass field with canals, lakes and ponds. This land best suited a people who chiefly earned their livelihood by agriculture, and it was this place that would later develop and become known to posterity as Varanasi.

It is not at all unlikely that prior to the settlement of the Aryans there were native peoples here, such as Dravidians, Colarians or some other group, and that these peoples had their own cultures too—but history is silent about them. Nevertheless, the gradual inclusion of many non-Vedic gods and goddesses like *Yakshas, Nagas, Ganas,* and *Matrikas*, within the fold of the Vedic gods of Varanasi is a positive indication of the existence of an indigenous population having a distinct religion and culture even before the advent of the Aryans in the area.

Aryans took possession of the area presumably without uprooting either the natives or their culture. Instead, the local people and their culture were gradually assimilated, as assimilation rather than annihilation has been one of the chief traits of Aryan civilization in India since its very inception. With the Aryan settlement here, the naming of places—rivers, lakes and the like—started on a large scale, as this is referred to in early scriptures and literature.

THE VEDIC AGE

According to the mythical Puranas, Kashi is a very ancient place—older than what we can conceive of in terms of history. Kasha, the seventh king of the Manu dynasty, was supposedly the first king of Kashi, and hence 'Kashi' possibly, derived its name from him. After a few generations, Dhanvantari, the founder of Indian Medical Science, according to this tradition, became the king. Divodasa, another king of Kashi, was engaged in war with the Haihaya king ruling a territory near Jabbalpura and vanquished the latter. This is all, however, part of mythology.

Historically, the probable date of settlement of Varanasi by the Aryans

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was sometime between 2000 BC and 1800 BC. The City has been referred to profusely in various branches of Sanskrit literature. The Vedas and Upanishads, for example, the *Shatapatha Brahmana* of the *Shukla Yajurveda*, the *Kaushitaki* and the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishads*, have referred to Kashi/ Varanasi as an affluent kingdom, a land of sacrifice and also a centre of learning.* Such references in the Brahmanas and Upanishads, probably compiled in the second millennium BC, prove that the City must have flourished as one of the centres of Vedic civilization. About a century before the *Mahabharata* War, the City was subdued by Jarasandha, the Magadha king whose capital was Pataliputra (modern Patna). Kashi soon became independent after the fall of Jarasandha and its king participated in the *Mahabharata* War in around 1400 BC as an ally of the Pandavas, ultimately to be killed in that great war.

During the early centuries of the first millennium BC, the kingdoms of Magadha in Bihar, Kaushambi in central U. P. and Koshala in Oudh flourished along with Kashi. Gradually, a rivalry grew between Kashi and Koshala. According to the *Jatakas,* Kansa, the king of Koshala, seized the Kashi *Janapada* and annexed it to his own kingdom, thus earning the title of 'Varanasiggaho'; here we find a reference to this time and to the term *Kashi-Koshala* as one of the pairs of the Shorhasha Mahajanapadas (sixteen political divisions) that were current in India shortly before the advent of the Buddha.

During the Vedic period, the citizens of Varanasi specialized in various professions in pursuit of the *Varnashrama Dharma*, and Varanasi became a prosperous city with skilled persons in all walks of life. Learned preceptors living in ashramas taught the Vedas and other sister disciplines to students who lived with them and led a life of purity and austerity. Thus, since the very foundation of Varanasi under the Aryans, it developed as a centre of learning, where thinkers and scholars of repute were nurtured. In the beginning, Vedic lore was the subject of special study, and the *Vedangas* must have also received special attention. Some educational institutions of Varanasi were older than those of Taxila, which also developed as a famous centre of learning. A free exchange of pupils between the academic institutions of these two places took place over the centuries. Owing to

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* For an exhaustive list of references to Kashi/Varanasi in the ancient Hindu and Buddhist scriptures, see K. Chandramouli, *Kashi: the City Luminous*, Appendix III, pp. 322-36.

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Greek and Scythian invasions later on, Taxila deteriorated as an academic centre, while Varanasi, being free from such depredations, not only upheld its former position, but progressed further and reached the dominating position as a centre of learning.

Among various occupations, agriculture and cow-breeding were prominent. Trade, commerce, arts and crafts were all known to the people. Soft and thin muslins, perfumes, scented oils, silks and silken fabrics, ivory and other forms of art and craft and architecture developed. Among the Vaishyas, or trading caste, members renowned for their wealth were known as *shreshthis*, or business magnates, and with this Varanasi's fame in commerce and arts and crafts grew. The City also had a well-organized army. During this period Varanasi grew as one of the chief centres of Aryan settlement and developed into one of the most prosperous cities of India.

JAINA AND BUDDHIST INFLUENCE

Suparshvanath, the seventh Tirthankara of the Jainas, was born in Varanasi. Again, Parshvanath, the twenty-third Tirthankara, was born in Bhelupura Ward in the eighth century BC. Mahavira, the twenty-fourth and last Tirthankara, visited the City during his itinerant teaching in the sixth century BC. These holy associations with the Tirthankaras in Varanasi, where Jainism had taken root, especially since the period of Parshvanath, made the City one of the major *Tirthas*, or holy places, of the Jainas.

Gautama Buddha came to Ishipattan or Rishipattana (present day Saranath) in 535 BC, from where he first turned the wheel of Dharma. It is here that he started preaching his sermons on the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. He also visited Varanasi a number of times during the period from 535 to 485 BC, where he preached his message and brought some of its important citizens into the fold.

During the Buddhist period, Saranath, because of its association with the Buddha, formed the nucleus of a large habitation. It was especially during the reign of Ashoka, the great Maurya emperor, that Saranath flourished greatly. During this time royal patronage brought Saranath into the limelight, the glory of which had so long been overshadowed by the brilliance of Varanasi. Hundreds of viharas and stupas, numerous statues of the Buddha and beautiful reservoirs were observed by Hiuen Tsang when he visited Saranath towards the middle of the seventh century AD.

The political history of Kashi during the period of Jaina-Buddhist influence was somewhat tumultuous. Towards the end of the sixth century

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BC, when Bimbisara, the king of Magadha, married Koshala Devi, the daughter of King Mahakoshala of Koshala, he was given Kashi as a sort of dowry for the bride. After Bimbisara's murder at the hands of his son, Ajatashatru, and the demise of his queen, Koshala Devi, who died of grief at the king's death, Prasenjit, the eldest son and new king of Koshala, caused a series of wars in reclaiming Kashi. This king of Koshala eventually became victorious in reconquering Kashi. Later on, a peace treaty was concluded between Magadha and Koshala. Prasenjit married off his daughter, Vajira Devi, to Ajatashatru and once again Kashi was given to the bride as dowry.

Thus, the kingdom of Kashi lost its independent status and was under the hegemony of the Koshala kings for a time. Prasenjit had placed his brother on the throne of Kashi as an auxiliary king, but Kashi did not remain under the Koshala kings for long and towards the end of Ajatashatru's reign Kashi was incorporated into the kingdom of Magadha.

In the fourth century BC, the Kashi-Koshala territory was ruled by Chandra Gupta Maurya from Pataliputra and after him by Ashoka (260 to 222 BC). It was in the third quarter of the first century AD that the City was invaded and conquered by Kanishka, the Kushana ruler. But this occupation of the City by the Kushanas was short-lived, as they were driven out towards the end of the second century AD. At this time, the Bharashivas came to the City and performed the *Dashashwamedha Yajna* (the sacrifice of ten horses) on the banks of the Ganga at a site that is perhaps the present site of the Dashashwamedh Ghat.

Varanasi was ruled by the Guptas during the fourth and fifth century AD and was included in the kingdom of Kanauj in the sixth century AD. It formed part of Harshavardhan's kingdom (610—650 AD) during the first half of the seventh century. During this time, King Shashanka of Gaurh (Bengal) occupied Varanasi, but when he left for Gaurh, Harshavardhan reconquered the City.

THE AGE OF THE PURANAS

Having been associated with the Tirthankaras of the Jainas and the Buddha himself, the City attracted many Jaina and Buddhist devotees and it came under considerable Jaina-Buddhist influence. This influence, however, was not so great as to overshadow that of Hinduism. In the seventh century AD, Hiuen Tsang observed that the greater portion of the kingdom of Varanasi 'believes in the heretical doctrines, and few revere the Law (religion) of the Buddha.'[20]

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The time of the initiation of the worship of the Puranic gods in Varanasi almost synchronized with the Buddhist period of its history. In the Vedic tradition there was no worship of images. During this period, however, the worship of demigods and goddesses and the worship of images of both the Vedic and Puranic gods and goddesses was prevalent. Hiuen Tsang notes:

> 'The statue of the God (Maheshwara Deva) in Teou-Chi (brass) is a little less than a hundred feet in height. Its aspect is grave and majestic and, at the sight of it, one is filled with respectful awe, as if it were indeed alive!'[21]

It was during this period that there was 'the rise to prominence of Shiva, Vishnu, Krishna and the goddess; the emergence of the temple cults; the crafting of *murtis*, which came to be worshipped in the temples; and the development of the popular rites of puja and pilgrimage!'[22]

Scriptures, mainly the Puranas, were written in praise of gods, goddesses and pilgrim-centres. The emergence of popular Hinduism took place in the City during this time. Varanasi now emerged as the premier religious centre of India and was considered the holiest of the holy–attracting multitudes of pilgrims not only from every corner of India, but also from abroad for its association with Hinduism, as well as Jainism and Buddhism. Thus, Varanasi, according to the *Jatakas*, became famous not only in India but also in the greater part of Asia during this time.

THE AGE OF REFORMATION AND SHANKARACHARYA

The rise of Buddhism was an indication that Hinduism needed reforms. Excessive animal killings in the name of sacrifice, too much emphasis on ritualism and dissension and intolerance among its followers were some of the unhappy developments of Hinduism during this period. Although the influence of Buddhism checked some of these developments, the exigency of reform of Hinduism and co-ordination between Hindus was still keenly felt. This exigency was met by Shankaracharya (788-820 AD), the great scholar-monk and religious reformer from South India. Shankaracharya visited North India on a mission to reform Hinduism and bring cohesion on one hand, and to counteract the Buddhist influence on the other. Although Buddhism had already started declining around five hundred years after the passing away of the Buddha, the City now felt the impact of Shankaracharya's presence and preaching, which led to the infusion of a new spirit into its religious and cultural life.

Politically, the Pala emperor of Gauḍ (Bengal), Rashtrakutas of Deccan

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and Pratiharas of Rajputana were the main contestants for the possession of Varanasi from the middle of the eighth century AD to the first quarter of the ninth century. Ultimately, the Pratiharas kept it annexed to their territory till the tenth century. The Chedis of Jabbalpore then occupied the City for but a few decades. It was during the rule of the Chedis that the City witnessed the first Muslim invasion in 1035 AD in the person of Nialtagin, a general of the son of Mahmud of Gazni, and though Nialtagin ransacked the City, he did not remain to rule it.

THE AGE OF ASCENDANCY DURING THE RULE OF THE GAHADAVALAS

After a brief period of political anarchy following Nialtagin's invasion, Varanasi was occupied in the last quarter of the eleventh century by the Gahadavala kings who made the City their capital. Thus, after almost two thousand years, the City again became the capital of an independent kingdom giving it great prestige and glamour. The Gahadavalas shifted the capital from Varanasi to Kanauj when the former was conquered by the Muslims. Still Varanasi, being a favourite place of the Gahadavala kings, continued to get royal patronage, having ascended to the zenith of glory and pomp during their rule, which lasted till the end of the twelfth century. Rajghat Plateau, with its newly renovated fort became the chief seat of administration during this time. Again, it was during this period that Buddhist and Hindu ascetics and scholars in both Saranath and Varanasi lived in harmony discussing and explaining their respective doctrines.

But this remarkable ascendancy of the City is today only a matter of history as all manifestations of its pomp and grandeur in the form of magnificent temples, mansions and statues were demolished later by Muslim invaders. Had the Muslim invasions been less devastating, it would probably have been possible for at least some of these masterpieces of architecture and sculpture to withstand the ravages of time—as they have in South India.

Politically, the position of Varanasi again became insignificant when the Gahadavalas were overthrown by the Muslims, who then ruled for about half a millennium, intent on reducing the City's position as a centre of Hinduism from one of honour to one of humiliation and from one of renown to one of obscurity.

THE MUSLIM THREAT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

The Muslim occupation of the City in the Middle Ages was marked by

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intolerance and atrocities committed against the vanquished, threatening the very existence of this old and reputed centre of Indian culture and religion. The people had to face incessant religious persecution and forced conversion by the Muslims.

We have noted that Nialtagin ransacked the City in 1035 AD, but left it soon afterwards. Syed Salar Masud, the son of the sister of Mahmud Ghazni, started from Ajmer and went towards Gonda with a passion to spread Islam. One of his followers, Malika Afzal Alvi, proceeded to the City and reached its northeastern boundary. A fierce battle followed, but the invasion was successfully resisted by the Hindus.

In the last quarter of the twelfth century the Hindu rulers of Northern and Western India continually vied with one another in extending their respective kingdoms, thereby weakening themselves. Their lack of political and military wisdom and farsightedness played right into the hands of their common enemy, the Muslim invaders. The Muslims took advantage of this internal dissension and disunity among the Indian chiefs, resulting in the defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan of Western India at the hands of Muhammad Ghori. Thereafter, Qutbuddin Aibak, Ghori's commander-in-chief, beheaded Prithviraj and invaded Varanasi in 1194. With the fall of Rajghat Fort, the City became exposed to the invaders who exhaustively looted it. Muslim historians have recorded that one thousand temples were demolished and the booty, loaded on 1400 camels, was dispatched to the Muslim overlord.

A Muslim governor was appointed to look after the administration of the vanquished land but was soon driven out and Qutbuddin had to recapture the City in 1197. This time stringent steps were taken to put the new administration on a strong footing.

Except during the rule of Akbar, the great Mughal who not only permitted, but in some cases even sponsored the rebuilding of temples, religious persecution continued during the whole of Muslim rule. Temples were demolished and icons were broken during at least seven separate invasions. Nialtagin, as previously mentioned, devastated the City in 1035; Qutbuddin in 1194; Firuz Shah Tughlaq in 1300; the Sharqi Kings of Jaunpur in the 1400s; Sikandar Lodi in the 1400s; and Shahjahan and Aurangzeb in the seventeenth century. During Aurangzeb's rule, in particular, most of the more famous temples, such as the Vishwanatha Temple, the gigantic Bindumadhava Temple and the Krittivasa Temple, were either completely or partially demolished and mosques were built on the sites.

During this Dark Age in Varanasi's history, the light of Hinduism was

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kept burning by undaunted Hindu residents and also by devout Rajput chiefs, who maintained comparatively close relations with the Mughal emperors. The role of the champions of the *Bhakti* movement, like Shri Chaitanya, Tulsi Das, Kabir, Ramananda, Vallabhacharya and their disciples, who either visited or lived in the City, was also no less remarkable in this respect. Some of these religious personalities, especially Kabir Das and his followers, also advocated a catholic and universal approach to religion. For their part, the Rajputs patronized Hinduism by constructing temples, ghats and mansions and also by maintaining Sanskrit academies, alms-houses and the like.

THE AGE OF REVIVALISM

When the Mughal Empire disintegrated after the passing away of Aurangzeb, lawlessness erupted throughout the empire. The fall of the Mughals coincided with the rise of the Marathas. The militant Marathas, being greatly devoted to Hinduism, were advocates of a Hindu empire and had a special attachment to Varanasi. They cherished a desire to restore the prestige and glory of the City, which had suffered terribly at the hands of the Muslims. With this idea in view, they wanted the Nawab of Oudh to cede Varanasi to them, as one of the conditions of their helping the Nawab against the Rohillas, rulers of the province of Rohillakhand, lying at the base of the Himalayas to the north-west of Oudh.[23] Though the Marathas never gained possession, they poured wealth into Varanasi for various types of religious works, such as the construction of temples and ghats, the running of *satras* and the patronization of scholars and saints, to earn religious merit, as they had done in the Middle Ages on a much smaller scale.

Even in the early part of the eighteenth century Varanasi was under the Nawab of Oudh who appointed Muslim governors. One such governor was Mir Rustam Ali (1730-1738) who became popular among both the Hindu and the Muslim residents for his sympathetic gestures towards all communities and also for his active interest in the City's culture. In 1738, Varanasi was cunningly seized from Mir Rustam Ali by Mansaram, the *zamindar* of Gangapore, who was the founder of the present Hindu line of the Kashi Raj. Mansaram died in 1740 and was succeeded by his son, Balwant Singh, who was young, active and intelligent and became the first formal Raja of this line. Thus, after more than five centuries of foreign rule, Varanasi got a Hindu ruler. Balwant joined Shah Alam, the Emperor of Delhi and Shuja-ud-Dowlah, the Nawab of Oudh, in their invasion of Bengal in 1763. He also joined the British camp with the Emperor after the battle of Buxar, and in terms of the

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arrangement made with the Emperor in 1764, his *zamindari* was transferred from Oudh to the British Government. But these arrangements were not approved by the higher authority of the Government, so when the Treaty of 1765 was concluded with Shuja-ud-Dowlah, the estate of Raja Balwant Singh was restored to Oudh. The Nawab, however, allowed Balwant Singh to continue in possession of the estate on condition that he pay the same amount of revenue as before.

In 1770 Raja Balwant Singh passed away after a busy and chequered life. The Nawab of Oudh had intended to dispossess his family of the estate left by him, but at the insistence of the British Government, the Nawab had to recognize the succession of Chet Singh, son of Balwant Singh, to the throne of Varanasi and also grant him a *sunnud* under the guarantee of the British Government. By a treaty concluded between the Nawab and the English in 1775, the sovereignty of the districts dependent upon Raja Chet Singh were transferred, in perpetuity, to the British Government, thereby placing the province under the control of a British Resident. Thus, 1775 was an important year in the history of the province of Varanasi, for it was in this year that the Muslim hegemony of about 578 years was replaced by yet another foreign rule for 172 more years. A sunnud was granted to Raja Chet Singh confirming him in his zamindari with civil and criminal administrations thereof subject to the following conditions: he should pay a tribute of *Sicca* Rupees 22,66,180; he should adopt appropriate measures for the interest and security of the country; and he should maintain peace. The Raja was also granted the power to coin money in his own name.

In 1778, Warren Hastings, the Governor General, ruled that the Raja should pay a subsidy of five lakhs (500,000) of rupees as a war contribution to the British due to Anglo-French hostilities at the time. Chet Singh was compelled to agree to that unjust demand for one year. Hastings exerted this financial pressure again in 1779 and 1780, as he was suspected by the British of being secretly disaffected and of having correspondence with enemies of the British Government.

Over and above this, in 1780 Hastings ordered Chet Singh to furnish 2,000 cavalry, which was later reduced to 1,000 at the latter's request. Obviously, the Raja was reluctant to meet these totally unjust demands from Hastings and to fulfil these feudal obligations to the British Government, nevertheless, he did mobilize 500 cavalry and an additional 500 infantry to meet the quota. Though Hastings was informed by Chet Singh that the sepoys had been gathered and were ready to serve the British Government, he was not pacified.

Hastings was determined 'to make him (the Raja) pay largely for his

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pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for his past delinquency,' and himself came to Varanasi to carry out this plan, placing Chet Singh under house arrest. And although Hastings' conduct in this affair was 'cruel, unjust and oppressive', the Raja submitted quietly. The humiliation with which the Raja was treated on the occasion of his arrest, however, caused great indignation among his soldiers, who suddenly rose up against the British and killed a number of English sepoys and three officers. All this happened without any instigation from Chet Singh.

The uprising of the Raja's soldiers and supporters and the consequent massacre of the English officers and sepoys frightened Hastings so much that he fled to Chunar for his life. Soon reinforcements from the British Army strengthened his hand and he managed to suppress the outbreak in Varanasi. Chet Singh's military guard was cut down and the Raja had to withdraw from the City. He collected his troops and made an appeal for aid to some Indian princes for the recovery of his kingdom but with no result. His troops were defeated in several petty skirmishes with the British, and finally, Chet Singh took refuge in Sindhia, the Maratha Chief, but nothing was ever achieved by this action. Being frustrated at every turn, the indomitable Raja passed away in relative obscurity in Gwalior in 1810.

The period from the downfall of the Mughals to the rise of the British was a period of revivalism for the position Varanasi had lost during the Middle Ages. The Hindu rulers of the City, as well as the chiefs and landlords of other provinces, especially of Maharashtra and Bengal, were instrumental in such a revival. A virtual architectural reconstruction of the City was made during this period and also during the British occupation that followed, and the patronization of Hindu religious traditions was revived in as liberal and extensive a manner as was possible.

THE WESTERN CHALLENGES

The British occupation of the City from 1781 to 1947, the year of India's independence, ushered in a new age in the history of the City. Chet Singh was formally deprived of his estate, which was given to Mahipnarain, grandson (daughter's son) of Raja Balwant Singh—subject to the payment of an annual tribute of forty lakhs of rupees to the Government.[24] This expensive demand made by the British caused much hardship and affliction for the Raja's subjects. The criminal administration of the zamindari and the civil and criminal administration of Varanasi, together with the powers of the mint, were taken out of the hands of the new Raja.

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The year 1781 is, thus, a landmark in the history of Varanasi, for it was in this year that the City witnessed another change of masters; henceforth, it would be under the direct administration of a power that was materially advanced, militarily strong and tactically shrewd; a suzerain from a far away country with which it had absolutely no previous acquaintance. This change brought both immediate and far-reaching consequences that would become evident in course of time.

In 1794, an agreement was concluded between the British and Raja Mahipnarain for the purpose of introducing the same system of judicial and revenue administration into the province of Varanasi that had been established in the provinces of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa the year before. The Raja agreed to accept one lakh of rupees a year in commutation of his zamindari rights in the provinces, exclusive of his *jageers* and *altumhga* grants, which were left to the absolute management of the Raja. Later on, the relation of the Raja with the British was further defined by Regulation VII of 1828, which curtailed more powers of the Raja. According to this Regulation, in the management of his family domains the Raja exercised the power of the Collector of Land Revenue, but in other respects he was subordinate to the Superintendent appointed by the British to supervise the general administration of his domains. The Raja remonstrated by writing a letter to the British Government requesting them to repeal this Regulation, but to no avail.

Raja Mahipnarain passed away in 1795 and was succeeded by his son, Uditnarain, who was succeeded in 1835 by his nephew and adopted son, Ishwariprasad Narain Singh. In March 1862, Raja Ishwarinarain received the assurance by a sunnud that in the absence of natural heirs, the Government would permit and confirm the adoption of any successor made by himself or by any future chief of his state and that such would be in accordance with Hindu law and the customs of his race. It is interesting to note here that this Raja would receive thirteen-gun salutes from British Government troops.

Ishwarinarain Singh continued to be the Raja of Varanasi for a fairly long time, from 1835 to 1889. He was one of the most remarkable rulers of his line, respected for his strong personality, keen interest in academic and cultural affairs and also for his patronization of distinguished persons in the fields of fine arts, education and literature. Truly the leading proponent of Varanasi culture in the nineteenth century, he exercised a tremendous influence over the people there.

In 1889, Ishwarinarain was succeeded by Prabhunarain, who, in 1912, was invested by the Government with ruling powers over his zamindari.

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Adityanarain Singh succeeded Prabhunarain in 1931, but his tenure was very short, as he passed away in 1939. He was succeeded by his adopted son, Vibhutinarain, that same year, while he was still very young. Vibhutinarain Singh was the last Raja of Varanasi and he handed over most of his territory to the new government of an independent India in 1947 under a merger agreement. The Zamindari Abolition Act reduced his property holdings even further.

Vibhutinarain, himself a scholar and a passionate promoter of Indian culture and classical learning, was also called by the conventional title of Maharaja or Kashi Naresh by the people of the City, who loved him and held him in high esteem.

The challenges faced by Varanasi under British rule were qualitatively different from those under the Muslims, and notwithstanding the fact that life, property and institutions appeared to be more secure than had been the case during the preceding six centuries, these new challenges to this traditional City were also of great magnitude.

THE GANGA

The Ganga is considered to be the holiest river by the Hindus, who have composed numerous hymns in her praise. It is near Varanasi that the river takes a crescent shape and changes its direction from the south to the north, thus becoming *uttaravahini*, and adding special holiness to it. The water of this river is considered to be *Brahmavari*, i.e., Brahman, the Supreme Reality, transformed into water, which frees man from the accumulated sins of this and previous births and grants him liberation. Bathing in it, drinking and using its water in ritualistic worship are all regarded as special acts of holiness and merit. The sacred City and the sacred river have made a mutual impact on each other and thus added to each other's holiness and appeal.

Large numbers of pilgrims journeyed to the City upon the Ganga, especially when other practical forms of transportation into the area were hardly available. The river was also utilized for carrying on trade and commerce. Again, it has helped in producing food by watering the fields of the hinterland. In addition to all these, the river has added special beauty and charm to Varanasi, inspiring Mirza Ghalib, the famous poet for example, to describe Varanasi as 'holding the mirror of the Ganga day and night like a woman fallen in love....' Thus, the Ganga has been playing a vital role in the religious, cultural and economic life of the City, without which, much of its glory, glamour, and prosperity would have never been attained.

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OPENING OF THE CITY TO THE WORLD OUTSIDE

Historically, the first formal opening of Varanasi to the outside world was made when the messages of Gautama Buddha were carried to Asiatic countries. Of course, the export of Varanasi silk to distant countries had started even before the spread of the gospel of the Buddha. In modern times Varanasi was introduced to the world only after the British were in possession of it. The City also came into the limelight on the occasion of Chet Singh's revolt in 1781, his dethronement by Warren Hastings and, finally, the impeachment of Hastings himself—when the Chet Singh affair and other incidents formed a charter of allegations against him and a storm of arguments and counter-arguments raged in the British Parliament.

Varanasi was further introduced to the West through the paintings of Western artists, the travel-accounts of these artists and also of the British East India Company's civil and military officers and other Western travellers. This picturesque centre of oriental culture, caught the imagination of both painters and travellers, and thus became a major theme in their compositions, which, in turn, attracted other Westerners here. One may recall, in this connection, how a picture of the majestic riverfront of Varanasi on a school exercise book moved the great European Indologist, Max Müller, in his youth.[25]

In addition to articles written in different magazines, separate monographs were also written on Varanasi by European authors. Among these are Rev. M. A. Sherring's *Benares, The Sacred City of the Hindus*, in 1869—a pioneering work being the first such monograph on the City's history and culture ever published in a European language; J. Murdoch's *Kashi or Benares,* in 1894; A. Parker's *A Handbook of Benares*, in 1895; E. B. Havel's *Benares, the Sacred City*, in 1905; C. P. Cape's *Benares, the Stronghold of Hinduism*, in 1908 and E. Greave's *Kashi,* in 1909.

The flow of travellers from the West to Varanasi, which started from the last quarter of the eighteenth century, did not cease after that, but increased rather considerably bringing visitors from other areas of the world as well.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study has been aimed at furnishing a descriptive and analytical account of the vistas of this City during the period of 1781 to 1857; however, in some cases, while presenting a religious picture of the City for example, some post 1857 developments have been dealt with. This period is of particular importance for it bears two milestones in Varanasi's history; the

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first being the foundation of British rule by the British East India Company, and second, the closure of the final chapter of that rule when the British Parliament directly took over the reins of administration of the City and, for that matter, all of India, after the Indian Revolt of 1857, known as the Sepoy Mutiny. The history of Varanasi during this period is essentially a history of religion and culture and not of politics, though some incidents did occur here which had political implications as well. Different dimensions of that religious and cultural history, for which this City is so famous, will be taken up for discussion in the following pages. Other important aspects, including its physical layout, society, economy, education, law and order etc., will also be dealt with to present a total picture of Varanasi during this period.

The British imported new ideas and institutions from the West in an imperialist strategy to consolidate their Indian Empire and to complete the political conquest of this land by cultural conquest as well. Christian missionaries, unwitting accomplices in this design, also aspired to conquer Varanasi for Christ.[26] To what extent these designs were successful and how the City reacted to these challenges of Western culture and civilization will be examined.

As suggested at the outset, there are also certain fundamental queries that must be raised. If Varanasi is truly the great city that many claim, what makes it great? If Varanasi is truly unique among cities of the world, what gives it its uniqueness? Answers to these and other relevant questions will also be attempted in this study.

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CHAPTER II

TOPOGRAPHY AND GROWTH OF THE CITY

BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY

A list of *mahallas* (localities) of 1781 gives us a rough blueprint of Varanasi at the time of the British occupation. A clear idea of the City's boundaries in the late eighteenth century may be formed from a letter by Samuel Davis, Magistrate of Benares, to Barlow, Sub-Secretary to the Government, informing him that Varanasi was bounded by the Varuna and Asi rivulets to the north and south, the Ganga to the east and a drain, dug under the direction of Magistrate Ali Ibrahim Khan, to the west. It appears from the 1796 List of Mahallas that the boundary of the City did not cross Luxa, Missirpokhra or Aurangabad to the west. However, between 1796-1829, the town definitely expanded north, south and west,[1] as the whole of the Cantonment and Secrole areas were developing during these years. The suburbs of the City consisted of temples, tanks, walled gardens, small markets, burial grounds and thoroughfares.

DIVISIONS OF THE CITY

Before proceeding with details of the City's layout and official divisions, we should take note of what the popularly accepted divisions were. Some divided the City into two portions, the *Pakka Mahal* and *Kachcha Mahal*. That which lay east of a street that ran from Chowk in the north to Godowlia in the south was Pakka Mahal and that which lay west of that same street was Kachcha Mahal. As the famous Temples of Vishwanatha and Annapurna and the burning ghat of Manikarnika fell within the Pakka Mahal, this mahalla was considered most holy and meritorious to reside in. This belief led to the habitation of a great throng of Hindus here. But local traditions varied on how the City was actually divided. According to one belief, the City consisted of four divisions, Kashi, Varanasi, Avimukta and the *Antargriha* of Vishwanatha, corresponding to progressively smaller circles respectively.[2] According to another view, the City was divided into three sections, extending from

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north to south. These were the areas of Omkara, Vishweshwara and Kedara respectively.[3]

The City has also been divided in different ways at different times for municipal or police administration with the number ranging from seven to fifteen divisions or wards. Again, though the exigencies of police administration did not necessarily coincide with those of municipal administration, in many cases divisions were made to best suit common purposes. At the beginning of our period the main wards were (1) Sudder Chubootra (or Chandni Chowk), (2) Kazi Mandi, (3) Kal Bhairo, (4) Telianala, (5) Dashashwamedh, (6) Ramapura, (7) Gheehatta and (8) Jagatganj. Official detailed divisions of wards and current extensions of the City were worked out in a Government paper in the last decade of the eighteenth century in which there were fifteen such wards (see 1796 list). Later on, the wards of Secrole and Cantonment developed in the north and northwestern outskirts of the City. Wards did not consist of an equal number of mahallas, but varied according to the number of inhabitants, rather than size or area. Thus, while wards in the heart of the City, like Sudder Chubootra, Telianala and Dashashwamedh, were thickly populated and had a greater number of mahallas under them, Durga Kunda and Shivala Wards, which formed the southern boundary of the City, had fewer residents, and consequently, fewer mahallas.

LISTS OF MAHALLAS

Now let us look at the mahallas in detail. Mahalla lists made in 1781, 1796 and 1809 were prepared for the purpose of police administration and the municipal services, while a list compiled in 1829 was prepared for a census and yet another in 1835 was designed mainly for municipal administration.[4] Among these the lists, those of 1796, 1829 and 1835 are the most exhaustive. Unfortunately, we do not get references to the wards under which each particular mahalla was placed in the lists of 1809 and 1829.

The Tables of Mahallas (based on the aforementioned lists and placed in the Appendix) show that while many mahallas are, of course, found in more than one list of mahallas, there are also some mahallas mentioned in a former list that have been dropped from subsequent lists, and again, new mahalla names appear in later lists. However, even if the name of a given mahalla is not found in a subsequent list, it does not necessarily mean that the mahalla in question ceased to exist or that its name was changed. For

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example, Nati Imli Mahalla, mentioned only in the 1796 list and not found in later lists, prominently existed later on and still exists today. Again, it also does not necessarily mean that a mahalla found only in later lists did not exist earlier. For example, we know that Brahmapuri Ahalya Bai Mahalla, found for the first time in the list of 1809, must have existed earlier, at least in the last quarter of eighteenth century.

Despite these inconsistencies, these tables give valuable clues regarding, first, which mahalla names had been dropped later on and/or had assumed new names, and second, which mahallas emerged anew. For example, Secrole and Cantonment appeared for the first time in the list of 1829. A cursory study of the lists also throws light on the extension of the City into new areas and on the density of the population in a particular area. Hence, the need of a more thorough study of these mahalla tables is more than justified as it may reveal many important facts about the layout of the City.

STUDY OF THE WARDS AND MAHALLAS

There is also some justification for research on the history of the name of each ward as well as the mahallas under them. Although such research would be extremely painstaking, it is likely to bring a wealth of information to light that would be invaluable for reconstructing the geographical, religious, social, economic, cultural and political history of Varanasi.[5] Keeping this in view, an attempt has been made to present data regarding the name of each mahalla[6] on the following pages. There are more than a few cases in which nothing at all could be determined and/or only suggestions or hypotheses have been offered regarding the sources of these mahalla names.

We shall confine our study to the lists of mahallas of the years 1781, 1796, 1809 and 1829, which we have traced, and which lie within the purview of our study. We shall also include a mahalla list from 1935 in the Table of Mahallas to facilitate a comparative study during the period of transition. The lists, dating from 1781 to 1829, give us a total number of about 946 mahallas. Obviously, the same mahalla names have been mentioned in more than one list, hence, in our actual counting, any recurring names have been counted once only. After scrutinising the lists, we arrived at a total of give or take 519 mahallas having existed in the City during our period. Among these, recorded information or hypothesis account for about 478 mahallas; we could find nothing at all about the

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remaining 41 mahallas. Though most of the entries included listings of ghats that were actually mahallas,[7] there are at least some listed mahallas that were not actually mahallas at the time of their inclusion in the list, but did become mahallas later on. This is especially true in the case of gardens mentioned in the lists of 1796.

HISTORY OF NAMES: 1781 LIST OF MAHALLAS

Now let us take up each list chronologically with a brief description of how each mahalla got its name.

The 1781 List of Mahallas comprised five wards each containing many mahallas. Of these five wards, three have names, while the remaining two are nameless. This list of wards and their mahallas follows:

1. Sudder Chubootra Ward :

Chubootra means high round, or a square or a meeting point of four roads or lanes generally centrally situated in a locality or mahalla and used by the people as a meeting place. In each ward there was a chubootra, and this 'Chubootra' is identified with modern-day 'Chowk'. It was called *Sudder*, or Principal, for it was the City centre, from where administration of the whole City and supervision over the other chubootras were carried out. Sudder Chubootra consisted of the following 13 mahallas :

Kundigar Tola : One who undertakes the profession of calendering cloth, is called a *kundigar. Tola* means a locality or colony. Hence, this mahalla was named after the colony of Kundigars who happened to reside here. The Kundigar Caste is mentioned in Prinsep's census of 1829. Of course, not only persons of a particular profession lived in any particular locality, people of other professions were there as well.[8]

Vishweshwar Math : Named after the temple or monastery in the name of Vishweshwara Shiva situated in this locality.

Nepali Khapra : A *khapra* is a roofing tile. Nepalese of the City preferred to live in buildings roofed with khapra. Hence, this locality received its name as the residential quarters of local Nepalese. Being ardent Hindus with a great love for Varanasi, some settled here. In present day Varanasi, however, the Nepalese community has vacated the Nepali Khapra Mahalla in favour of the area around Pashupatinatha Temple near Panchaganga Ghat.

Brahma Nal : Named for drain (*nala*) known by the name of the nearby temple of Lord Brahma. Large drains here were connected to the

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Ganga. The original name of Brahma Nal was perhaps Pitamahasrotika. According to another opinion, *Brahmanal* is derived from *Brahmanadi*.

Cachowri Gali : Named for a lane (*gali*) in which *kachowri*, a fried preparation of wheat dough mixed with bruised pulses, is prepared and sold on a large scale from small shops. The former name of this lane was possibly Koocha Ajayab.

Chowk : From a public market-place where shops of various articles and commodities were situated.[9]

Mint Gate : Named after the gate of a mint. Before the advent of the British, coins were stamped at a mint that was established here in 1730 by the Nawab of Oudh. Some hold that coins in the name of Shah Alam were issued from here and when a new mint was constructed by the British, this old one, familiar as *Purani* (old) *Tankshal* (mint house)*, lost its importance.

Bula Nala : From a drain that was fairly old. Some hold that *Bula* is a corruption of the word *burha*, meaning 'very old', but according to others, this name was derived from the Viloka Tirtha which was situated here.

Nandan Shaw : Named after a local *rais*, Nandan Sahu.

Silk Market : The actual name was Resham Katra, the name of a silk market.

Dal Mandi : From a *mandi*, which means market, this market was named after Raja Daalchand, a local rais who belonged to the Jain community. There is a mistaken popular belief that *dal* (pulse) was sold here and hence its name.

Raj Mandil : From the palace of the Raja of Bundi of Rajasthan.

Chubootra : Not identified.

2. Kazi Mandi Ward :

This ward's name is from a market-place that was named after a *Kazi*, possibly one Mohammad Amin. This ward consists of the following seven mahallas :

Chubootra : This also cannot be identified.

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* Later, the same place housed the Civil Court: still later, it was called *Purani Adalat*, when the court was moved from this location to the other side of the Varuna River.

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Mandi Aam : *Aam* means mango, so this mahalla appears to have been named after a mango market-place. According to another opinion, the actual name was Ambia Mandi, a market-place named for Gulam Ambia, who was the Governor of Varanasi in 844 AH.

Bahelia Tola : *Bahelia* is the name of a caste whose profession was catching and selling birds. The mahalla was named after the colony of bahelias who lived here. Bahelias are mentioned in the census taken by Zulfiqar Ali in 1801.

Chetun Pura : This is probably modern Chhittanpura. Possibly it was named after one Chhittan, a Muslim weaver, who came here from the village of Maan in Azamgarh.

Naya Pura : *Naya Pura* means new mahalla, and this one probably came into being at this time.

Hanuman Phatak : It received its name from the *phatak* (gate) named after Hanumana[10] whose temple is situated nearby. According to another view, the idol of Hanumana was placed on the phatak of this mahalla and hence its name.

Tirmohani Khurd : *Tirmohani* means a junction of three streets or lanes, and *khurd* means small. It stands to reason then that this mahalla was named after a junction of three streets that met here.

3. Chubootra Kalbhyro Ward :

Named for the deity Kalabhairava, who, according to the scriptures, was born out of Shiva's anger to chastise the proud 'Prajapati Brahma'. Kalabhairava is believed to be the *Kotwal*, or god-magistrate, of the City. This ward consisted of the following six mahallas :

Gai Ghat : *Gai* means cow. It appears from the steps of the ghat that it was built for enabling cows to go to the river to drink and pack animals to carry cargo. According to another view, it received its name from the statue of a cow that at one time was installed above the ghat.*

Jatan Bar : It is believed that Shri Chaitanya, the famous saint of Bengal, stayed at this place where a *bat* (banyan tree) stood. According to another opinion, Shri Chaitanya met Swami Prakashananda Saraswati here and its original name was Chaitanya Bat, which was later corrupted into Jatan Bar.

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* See Chapter VIII—The Ghats, for further details.

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Tirmohani : We have already found Tirmohan Khurd Mahalla in the Kazi Mandi Ward. This is possibly Tirmohani *Kalan*, or Tirmohani 'the large'.

Dara Nagar : Named after Dara Shukoh, the celebrated Mughal Prince, who had the Upanishads translated into Persian by the pandits of Varanasi.[11] He was believed to have resided in this locality. According to another opinion, this mahalla was named after an ancient forest called *Daruban*.

Raj Mandil : Possibly the name came from the palace belonging to the chief of Bundi.

Chubootra : Not identified.

4. Chubootra Telia Nala :

From a drain called Telia Nala. *Teli* is the name of a caste whose profession was the pressing and selling of oil. The telis inhabited either one or both banks of this drain. Chubootra Telia Nala Ward consisted of the following six mahallas :

Patni (*Pathani ?*) **Tola** : Possibly it was named after Raja Patni Mall, the famous shroff of Varanasi. According to another opinion, it was named after a settlement of *Pathans* (Afghans) in this locality.

Tirmohani : From the junction of three streets.

Tedhi Nim : *Terha* means 'something which is bending'. *Nim* is a margosa tree. Hence, the mahalla may have been named after a bent margosa tree.

Phatak Sarai : From the *phatak* (gate) of a *sarai* (inn), or a phatak near a sarai.

Bhadaini : Corrupted from *Bhadraban*, the mahalla was named after a forest (*ban*) called Bhadraban.

5. Chubootra Dashashwamedh Ward :

According to the Puranas,[12] Lord Brahma performed ten *Ashwamedha Yajnas* (sacrifice of horses) with the help of Raja Divodasa of Kashi. Formerly, the same place was famous as 'Rudra Sarovar'. According to Dr K. P. Jayaswal, the famous Bharashiva Rajas defeated the Kushanas and performed the ceremony of ten Ashwamedha Yajnas here.[13] From the point of the number of mahallas, this was the largest ward, consisting of the following 14 mahallas :

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Sonar Pura : Named from the settlement of goldsmiths (*swarnakar*) in this locality.

Derew Singh's Mansion or **Dedh Singh ki *Haveli*** (mansion) : From the mansion of a *rais* of that name. For further details, see Dingur Singh ki Pul Mahalla under the Chubootra Dashashwamedh from the list of 1796.

Man Sarovar : From Manas Sarovar,[14] a *kunda* (tank) in this locality named after the famous holy lake in Tibet of the same name.

Ganga Mahal : Named for a mansion associated with the deity, Gangakeshava, whose image was installed near the Ganga Mahal Ghat.[15]

Ahalya Bai's Phatak : From a gate named after the famous Maharashtrian Queen Ahalya Bai of Indore, who came to the City and earned a great reputation by undertaking various types of religious and charitable activities during the second half of eighteenth century.

Rani Bhavani's Phatak : From a gate named after Rani Bhavani, the famous lady *zamindar* of Natore, East Bengal, who, like Rani Ahalya Bai, was also famous for her various acts of charity and munificence and was addressed as the 'Annapurna of Kashi'. She built a mansion here.

Shitala Ghat : From a ghat named after the temple of goddess Shitala.

Dashashwamedh : See Chubootra Dashashwamedh Ward.

Jagajiban Pura : Possibly, it was named after a person named Jagajiban.

Jangambaḍi : From a monastery of the *Jangambaḍi* sect of the *Shaivas* of South India. This is a fairly old monastery and it once enjoyed the patronization of Aurangzeb, the Mughal emperor. The math used to provide lodging to a large number of pilgrims from the South.

Chubootra : It cannot be identified.

Agastya Kunda : From a kunda named after Agastya, the great Hindu sage. According to the Puranas, Agastya devoted himself to *tapas* in his ashrama in Kashi. He is believed to have been born as Vedavyasa in the *Dwapara* Age.[16]

Phatak Choushatti : From a gate named after the Choushatti Yoginis, the sixty-four female attendants of goddess Durga.[17] According to the *Kashi Khandam*, they came to the City under Shiva's orders to use their magic powers to oust Raja Divodasa from Kashi. But the *yoginis* failed in

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their task, themselves being enchanted by the magical charm of Kashi and finally settled there.[18]

Ahia Vir : Ahia Vira is a local demigod, a hero worshipped by the backward classes. The mahalla was named after the seat of this demigod.

6. Chubootra Ward :

This ward bears no specific name. Perhaps it is the same as Ramapura. This ward consisted of the seven mahallas listed below :

Lucksa : This is a corrupt form of 'Lakshmi', derived from the deity of Mahalakshmishwara or the Lakshmi Kunda which are both located here.[19] According to another opinion, this mahalla was named for Lavakusheshwara Shiva.

Rani Bhavani's Well : This is identical to the Rani Kuan (well), constructed by the renowned Rani Bhavani of Bengal. The mahalla was named after this well.

Bedanand's Bazar : This is possibly Sadanand's Bazar. In later lists of 1796 and 1829, we find references to Sadanand Bazar. The mahalla has been named after a bazar or market-place set up either by Munshi Sadananda, the Bakshi of Raja Chet Singh, or one Lala Sadananda of the City against whom Hastings had filed a complaint to Chet Singh on March 18, 1779. Then again, these two persons might also be identical.[20] The name Sadananda is also mentioned among the Gujarati merchants who provided certified testimony in favour of Hastings during his impeachment.

Deoria Vir : Named for the seat of a local demigod of that name.

Sonar Pura : Possibly the same mahalla also under Chubootra Dashashwamedh.

Phatak Sheikh Salim : From a gate named after a Muslim saint who probably lived in the time of Akbar, the Mughal emperor. His tomb lay near the phatak of that mahalla.

Raj Mandil : From the palace of a king or chief located here.

7. Under the Chubootra :

This last ward mentioned in the 1781 list only as 'Under the Chubootra', consisted of the following seven mahallas :

Aurangabad : It was probably named after Emperor Aurangzeb.

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Kashi Pura : From the temple of the goddess Kashi.

Bazar Babu Paswan Singh : Possibly named after a bazar set up by Babu Paswan Singh, a rais who could not be identified.

Harteerth : The name of this mahalla has been derived from *Harapapatirtha*, or according to another opinion, from *Hansatirtha*, a kunda.

Sheikh Salim Phatak : Possibly a duplication of a mahalla mentioned under Chubootra Ward.

Raj Mandil : From the palace of a king or chief, situated in this locality.

Pan Dariba : From a market-place where betels were sold.

The following are 23 names of mahallas existing in 1781, not included in the above list, but mentioned in a list of watchmen in charge of phataks :

Ram Ghat : From a ghat named after Lord Rama, one of the divine incarnations of the Hindus. According to another opinion, it was named after Vira Rameshwara, an idol of Shiva.

Sut Tola : *Sut* means yarn and also carpenter. So it may have been named after a settlement of carpenters, or after a settlement of Muslim weavers set up by a Muslim queen of Jaunpur and employed in the manufacture of yarn.

Gola Dinanath : From a corn market-place established by Dinanath, a Bengalee. It was also known as Maharaj Ganj.[21]

Machhar Hatta : *Machh* means fish, so this name comes from a fish market.

Gali Sakarkand : *Sakarkand* is a kind of sweet potato. This was named after a lane (*gali*) possibly in which a sweet potato market-place was situated.

Bangali Tola (Bengali Tola) : Named for a settlement of Bengalees.

Gowal Das : Named after the famous shroff, Gowal Das Sahu. He was the Nagar Seth (chief shroff) of Varanasi. It was in his house that a *panchayet* was summoned to decide the Gopaldas-Kashmiri Mall (two famous shroffs of the City) case.[22]

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Chet Ganj : From a market-place named after Raja Chet Singh, who had set it up.[23]

Madho Ray : Named for the famous temple of Vindumadhava situated on the bank of the Panchaganga Ghat. This temple was converted into a mosque during the reign of Aurangzeb. Its lofty *minars* offered one a view of the City.

Kalka Gali : From a lane, which was named after the goddess Bhadrakali, whose temple was situated nearby. According to another view, Kalka was actually Kalaratri Durga.[24]

Dudh Vinayak : Named for the temple of Doodh Vinayaka (a form of Ganesha).

Ghasi Tola : It is not certain whether it was named after a colony of grass-cutters or a particular person named Ghasi or Ghasiram.

Balmukund : Named after a person who could not be identified. According to another belief, it was named after a deity of that name.

Lahori Tola : From a settlement of people from Lahore, i.e., Punjabis, mainly *Saraswat* Brahmins and *Kshatris*.

Mehboose Khana : Perhaps it was named after a kine-house.[25]

Madanpura : There is a lot of confusion regarding the name of this mahalla mostly inhabited by Muslims. Some believe that it was named after the deity of Madanmohan, installed here by Rani Bhavani of Bengal. There is reference to one Gali Madanmohan in the mahalla lists of 1809 and 1829 being situated in the vicinity of Gali Ganesh and Sonarpura, perhaps named after the deity, Madanmohan, the temple of which was also perhaps situated nearby. So it is held that Madanpura Mahalla was named after this same deity. According to others, it was named after Madanpal or Madanchand, the Gahadwal king of Varanasi. There is yet another view that it was named after Madaneshwara Shiva, installed by King Madanpala, a descendant of Raja Samudrapala, the Shalivahan king. The temple of this deity situated here was later demolished by Muslims.

Local Muslims, however, believe that 'Madanpura' is a Persian word which denotes a 'place of peace' and that this name was given by the Persian caravans who had reached Varanasi in the Middle Ages. The Hindus would not allow them to settle in the heart of the City, so they set up this settlement in the southern outskirts of the City which forms the present site of Madanpura.

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Ganesh Chamrea : *Chamar* means shoemaker and also denotes a caste. It appears the mahalla was named after a person named Ganesh whose profession was shoemaking.

Ali Ganj : From a market-place named for one Ali who could not be identified. He may have been Mir Rustam Ali, the Collector of Varanasi in the 1730s.

Karna Ghanta : Named for Karnaghanteshwara Shiva, whose image was installed in the Karnameru Temple constructed by Raja Karnadev, the Chandella King in this locality.[26] According to another opinion, this mahalla was named after the deity of Ghantakarna, one the chief *ganas* or attendants of Shiva, who is belived to have been protecting the northern area of Varanasi.

Raja Darwaja : From the gate (*darwaja*) of a palace of the Kashi Naresh once situated here.

Gali Chandoo Nau : This is also called 'Gali Chandoo Hajjam' and both *nau* and *hajjam* mean barber. Hence the mahalla was named after a lane associated with a barber named Chandoo.

Dood (Dedh) Mall : Named after Dedh Mall, a rais, who was possibly a Punjabi Kshatri.

Following are the names of four *sarais* (inns) mentioned in the record of 1781 that were referred to as mahallas in the later lists of 1796 :

Shaista Khan : From an inn named after the Mughal general Shaista Khan, who once visited the City.

Sarai Aurangabad : We have already taken note of a mahalla called Aurangabad. This sarai, named after Aurangabad Mahalla, developed into a mahalla later on.

Mir Rustam Ali : Named after Mir Rustam Ali, who was the Governor of the City.

Setab Roy : Named after a rais of that name.

1796 LIST OF MAHALLAS

We have already mentioned the letter from Magistrate Davis of Varanasi to Barlow in 1796, giving us an idea of the areas of the City at that time. This letter contained a list of important places, which was prepared in accordance with Section 23 of Regulation 17 of 1795. This is

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a very important list, also significant regarding the layout of the City in the early stages of British rule. This list shows the names of an additional 15 wards and 367 mahallas and quasi-mahallas, among which, only those appearing for the first time in this list will be mentioned below, as the rest of the mahallas have already been noted :[27]

1. Sudder Chubootra Ward :

This ward consisted of 42 mahallas, 21 of which are listed below. (See also 1781 list of mahallas.)

Thatheri Bazar : From a market-place of braziers, *thathera*, this bazar was a market-place where braziers both manufactured and sold their commodities.

Sundia Mahalla : From a quarter of the *sundia* caste whose members distil spirituous liquor. This is derived from the Sanskrit term *shundi*, an elephant-trunk-like device for distillation.

Govind Pura : Named after one Govinda who could not be exactly identified. He might have been the king Govinda Chandra of the Gahadavala Dynasty[28], or possibly Govind Chand, one of the *mahajans* of the City.

Bhooye Lotan : Possibly from *Bhumilotan*, but further details are not known.

Path Vedeshwar : From a *path* (way) to the temple of Vedeshwara Shiva, believed to be the giver of the merit of reading the four Vedas.[29]

Gali Sukhlal Shah : From a lane, named after one Sukhlal Sahu, a famous shroff of the City in the eighteenth century.[30]

Siddheshwari : Named for the goddess Siddheshwari, whose seat was located here.

Gaḍbasi Tola : Named after a quarter known as Gaḍbasi, meaning people who live in a fort, or *garh*. This fort was constructed by Mir Rustam Ali, the revenue collector of Varanasi.[31] According to another belief, this colony or *tola* was established in 1194 by the inmates of Raj Ghat Fort, who had fled from that fort at the time of a Muslim invasion. According to still another opinion, this mahalla derived its name from the settlement of people from Gahadwal here.

Khazah Kasim : Probably named after a person who could not be identified.

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Swarga Duari : From *swargadwar*, meaning gateway to heaven. According to the *Kashi Khandam*, gods moved on to *Machhodari* through this place. According to another view, it was named for Swargadwareshwara Shiva.

Kunj Gali : From a lane that is crooked and narrow (*kunj*). It was shady owing to closely erected houses on either side of the lane.

Sakshi Vinayak : Named after Vinayaka, a form of Ganesha.*

Mandi Jaddu : *Mandi* means market. It was named after a market-place, or a *jhoprhi*, named after one Jaddu Yadav who belonged to the *kunbi* caste.[32]

Houz Katorah : From a pond encircled by a market-place. The story goes that Nawab Mamur Khan, the Governor of Varanasi during the time of Farrukshiyar, constructed a tank at his own house in this locality. He ordered all the people present in his court to fetch one *katorah* (bowl) of milk and pour it into the new tank. Although everyone—thinking that the others would pour in milk—brought only water, the Nawab pardoned them anyway. Later the mahalla was called Houz Katora.**

Katra Nakir (Nasir?) **Ullah Khan** : A *katra* is a market-place surrounded by a wall on all sides. Therefore, this mahalla was most likely named after such a market-place associated with an unidentified Muslim.

Haḍha : This name was corrupted from *Asthikshepa taḍag*, referred to in the *Kashi Khandam*, meaning a pond in which *harh*, that is, bones, are thrown. It is said that there was a cremation ground here in ancient times.

Mahalla Than Singh : Named after one Than Singh, possibly a Rajput.

Pathar Galia : From a cobbled lane or a lane where stones (*pathar*) were available.

Mohma ka Nala : The source of this name could not be discovered.

Bhandari Gali : This was named for a lane associated with one Bhandari, who could not be identified. *Bhandari* generally means storekeeper.

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* See Chapter VI for further details.

** *Katora* was a term frequently used for ponds, possibly due to their hollowed shape, like the Ram-katora in Banaras itself or the Tal-Katora in Delhi.

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Mahalla Haranarayan : After a person who could not be identified.*

2. Chubootra Dashashwamedh Ward (south of Sudder) :

This ward consisted of 39 mahallas, 25 of which are listed here. (See the 1781 list for the history of the name, 'Dashashwamedh'.)

Dingur Singh ki Pul : In the Mahalla List of 1781, we find one mahalla named Dedh (Derew) Singh ki Haveli, that is, the mansion of Dedh (Derew) Singh, who was possibly a Bundi chief. This mahalla was named after a wooden bridge, built in 1785, over a waterline that is now Dashashwamedh Road, by one Dingur Singh, a rais who may be identical with the former Dedh (Derew) Singh. According to another source, it was named for a European, Derecksy, who had built the bridge. Again, according to a popular belief, *derecksy*, a species of vegetable, used to be sold in a market-place situated on the south side of the bridge.

Haveli Maniar Singh : From the mansion of Maniar Singh, the nephew of Raja Balwant Singh of Varanasi.

Kamal Giria : Possibly named after a Hindu monk of that name.

Shitala Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats, for details.

Chella Pura : The source of this name could not be discovered.

Bidda Chhatra : A *satra* or *chhatra* is an alms-house and this mahalla was named after one possibly instituted by a Bengalee (Bidda).

Panch Pedua : This is actually *Panchapandava*, the famous five Pandava brothers of the epic *Mahabharata*, who installed one Shiva *lingam* here called the Pandaveshwara Shiva.[33]

Baḍa Nim : From a big *nim* tree (margosa).

Kynt ka Necheh : *Kynt* or *kantha* might have been derived from Nilakantha, an epithet of Shiva, and *necheh* is beneath, hence the name of the mahalla that is situated beneath the seat of Nilakantha Shiva.[34] The temple of Nilakantheshwara was situated near the Kedar Ghat.

Brahmapuri : From a colony or a cluster of houses set up by a rich man for the settlement of the Brahmins.

Garuḍeshwar : Named for the idol of Shiva installed by Garuḍa, the *Pauranik* bird and carrier of Lord Vishnu.

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* See the Table of Mahallas in the Appendix for the names of the rest of the mahallas.

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Chouhatta Seewen : The source of this name could not be discovered.

Koocha Kewal Giri : From a lane (*koocha*) named after a monk named Kewal.

Baḍa Kunda : From the name of a large holy tank.

Ganesh : Named for Ganesha, god of wisdom.

Koocha Marhatta : From a lane named after the settlement of the Maharashtrians in this locality.

Koocha Gosai : From a lane named after a *Gosain*, a religious person, who could not be identified.

Khallis Pura : Named after Khallis Khan, a Muslim who was the Governor of Varanasi during the rule of Ibrahim Maliq-us-Shark of Jaunpur around 1400.

Tripur Bhairo : Named for Tripura Bhairavi, one of the *shaktis*, who, according to the *Kashi Khandam*, sprang from the body of Uma (goddess Durga), to fight with Durgasura.[35]

Mir Ghat : From a ghat named after Mir Rustam Ali, Revenue Collector of Varanasi during the early part of eighteenth century.

Bag Maniar Singh : From a garden named for Maniar Singh.

Hadar Bag : From a garden owned by one Hada, a chief of the Rajputs, who could not be further identified.

Haveli Lallo : From the mansion of a person named Lallo who could not be identified.

Haveli Maniar Singh : From a mansion belonging to one Maniar Singh, a rais of the City. There is another mahalla with the name of a garden perhaps named for the same Maniar Singh (see Bag Maniar Singh).

Pitambar Pura : It cannot be definitely said whether it was named after a person or after the manufacturers of *pitamvara*, a yellow cloth.

3. Chubootra Bhyronath Ward (west of Sudder) :

This was identified with Kal Bhairo (see 1781 list). This ward consisted of 44 mahallas, 31 of which are listed here. (The name of one mahalla is missing from the list available.)

Bibi Hatia : From a market-place, named after a respectable Muslim

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woman who probably belonged to the period of Emperor Akbar. It was adjacent to Vishweshwar Ganj.

Katua Pura : From one Kutuban or Sultan Qutbuddin Aibak. According to another opinion, its ancient name was Kotpal or Katua, meaning yarn-spinners.

Chowk : The source of this name could not be discovered.

Bhararia : The source of this name also could not be discovered.

Hathum Ali : After a Muslim who could not be identified.

Katra Bharamal : From a market-place associated with one Bhara Mall or Bihari Mall.

Nick Bazar : From a market-place named after one Nick or Nayak, a person who could not be identified.

Mull Ki : Named after a colony of *mullaha* or boatmen.

Pipal Mohery : The source of this name is not known.

Haloo Gir : Possibly it was named after a monk.

Mulchand : After an unidentified person.

Choudhuri : Named after either a head of the locality or the surname of a person.

Buchye Tola : After an unidentified person named Buchye or Bachchi.

Bazar Bauli Bhikhi Rai : From the market-place that was situated by the side of a *bawli*, a large well named after one Bhikhi Rai.

Ratan Phatak : From a gate named after an unidentified person named Ratan.

Mahalla Govinda Naik : Named after one Govind Naik, who was possibly a Maratha.

Mangala Gauri : Named for Mangala Gauri, a form of Durga, whose image, according to the *Kashi Khandam*, was installed by the Sun-god.[36]

Durga Ghat : From a ghat named after the goddess Durga with the Brahmacharini Durga temple nearby.

Chowk Daduji : From a chowk named after Daduji, the famous preceptor of the *Dadupanthis*, a religious sect.

Narain Dikshit : Named after Narain Dikshit, the preceptor of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath, who lived in the City for a considerable time.

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Teja Singh : Possibly from a *bhumihar*, who could not be identified.

Ram Joshi : After a Maratha of that name.

Madanmohan : Named for the deity Madanmohana, an epithet of Lord Vishnu.

Vrindaban Jani : Possibly after an unidentified Gujarati.

Bazar Shesh mohan : Possibly from a market-place named for either the deity of Shesnamohana or the Shesha Madhava temple situated nearby.

Raja Pura : After a colony set up by a chief or a king.

Madhyameshwar : Named for the Madhyameshwara Shiva deity.

Vridhkal : Named for the deity, Vriddhakaleshwara Shiva, which, according to the *Kashi Khandam*, was installed by a king named Vriddhakal.[37]

Dubgur Tola : Named after a colony of *dubgurs*, a class of people, whose profession was processing leather.

Mahallanath : Named for the deity-lord of a mahalla, a demigod who ministered to the welfare of that mahalla.

Muhammad Shahid : Named after an unidentified Muslim.

Rajana : The source of its name is unknown.

4. Chubootra Kazi Mandi Ward (north of Sudder in the 1781 list): This ward consisted of 21 mahallas, 16 of which are listed here :

Nayee Basti : Named for a newly (*nayee*) established colony (*basti*).

Rouza Madar : A *rouza* is a mausoleum and this was named after the mausoleum of Madar, a great Sunni saint who died in 838 Hizri. His disciples constructed this rouza.

Chubootra Hossain Khan : From a chubootra named after one Muslim who could not be identified further.

Hossain Pura : Perhaps from the same Hossain Khan after whom the preceding mahalla was named.

Allum Pura : After a Muslim who could not be identified.

Chundoo Pura : After an unidentified person.

Chhetun Pura : The source of this name has not been discovered.

Naya Pura : Named for a newly (*naya*) established colony, the details of which have not been uncovered.

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Khalifa Juhoor : Named after an unidentified Muslim.

Azezun ka Mandi : From a market-place named after a lady called Azezun.

Koyreear Tola : Named for a colony of either the caste of *koyree*, peasants who would cultivate or sell green vegetables, or *koree*, a caste of weavers.

Dargah Chandan Shahid : From a tomb dedicated to the Muslim saint Chandan.

Dargah Kutub Shahid : From a tomb dedicated to the Muslim saint Kutub.

Chick Tola : Named for colony of butchers who sold goat and sheep meat.

Salim Pura : Named after a Muslim saint of that name.

Machhodari : From the famous Matsyodari Kunda with a long waterline having some connection with the Ganga.[38]

5. Telianala Chubootra Ward (west of Sudder Ward) :*

This ward consisted of 40 mahallas, 35 of which are listed below:

Prahlad Ghat : Named for Prahlada, who dedicated the deity of Prahladeshwara Shiva there.[39]

Raj Ghat : See Chapter VIII for details on ghats.

Purana Killah : From an old (*purana*) fort, or *killah*, which had existed here.

Kachcha Sarai : From a thatched inn.

Sundhooa : The source of this name is unknown.

Dallalun : Possibly it was named for a colony of brokers.

Kangoo : The source of this name is unknown.

Ghasiara Tola : Named for a colony of grass-cutters, or *ghasiara*.

Mufti : Named after a settlement of Muslim lawgivers, or *mufti*.

Bhagat : Named for a person who could not be identified.

Ganj Bhagat : From a market-place named after the Bhagat of the preceding mahalla.

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* See the entry for Telianala under Mahalla List of 1781.

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Lal Khan : Named after Lal Khan, the *Sipaha-salar* of Raja Balwant Singh or a local governor of the early eighteenth century.

Bhur Duary : Possibly from a house that had twelve openings (*Barah Duary* ?).

Kayathan : Possibly from the settlement of *Kayasthas*, a Hindu caste.

Gulzar Mahal : The source of this name is unknown.

Kazi : Named after a Muslim judge (*kazi*) who could not be identified.

Haveli Josser Khan : From the mansion of an unidentified Muslim.

Nilkant : Named after the deity, Nilakantheshwara Shiva.

Mir Adut : After an unidentified Muslim.

Bazar Lal Khan : From a market-place named after Lal Khan (see Mahalla Lal Khan).

Adhai Kangure ki Masjid : From a mosque here that had two and a half turrets or towers.

Bazar Chowhatta : From a market-place situated at a crossroads.

Adampura : Probably named after one Adam Baba. But according to another opinion, it comes from one Adam Khan, appointed Governor of Varanasi by Emperor Sher Shah Suri.

Katra Dara Shikoh : From a *katra*, meaning 'a walled market-place', named after the great Mughal Prince Dara Shukoh.

Gadhee Sheikh : Most likely from the palace of a Muslim who could not be identified. But according to another opinion, a queen named Shogah constructed a pond here.

Pathani Tola : Named for a settlement of Pathans (Afghans).

Hoonkaleshwar : Taken from Omkareshwara or Pranaveshwara, one of the famous *siddha lingams* of Shiva, 'the Lord of *Om*' in Varanasi.[40]

Nirkhi : *Nirkhi* means a person who collects octroi or duty taxes. Hence, the mahalla was probably named after a nirkhi.

Pullow Daran : The source of this name is not known.

Santerason : The source of this name is not known, either.

Buttao Shahid : Named after one Bhutau, who was said to have become a martyr. His tomb was on the Gai Ghat.

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Kameshwar Mahadeo : Named for the deity, Kameshwara Shiva, who is believed to fulfil men's prayers. According to the *Kashi Khandam*, this deity was installed by the sage Durvasa.[41]

Trilochan : Named after the famous deity of Trilochana Shiva.[42]

Sarai Ghat : Meaning a ghat where a *sarai* (inn) was located.

Naya Ghat : Meaning a newly constructed ghat.

6. Chubootra Chowkhamba Ward (east of the Sudder) :

This ward took its name from a building supported by four massive pillars towards the north-eastern extremity of the street near chowk.[43] Listed here are 15 of the ward's 21 mahallas :

Phatak Rangil Das : From a gate named after one Rangil Das, a Gujarati banker of the eighteenth century.

Gali Gola : From a lane that led to a place of trading.

Mama Deo : Perhaps named after a demigod.

Gali Siddhmata : From a lane that led to the temple of Siddhamata, who is identified with *siddhi*.[44]

Gali Sewakram : The name originated from a lane, perhaps, named after Lala Sewakram, the agent of Nana Faḍnavis, the famous Maratha statesman.[45]

Mokeem : The source of this name is not known.

Sankata : Named after the female deity, Vikata Matrika, popularly known as Sankata.

Gali Sadho Lal : From a lane named after Sadholal, a rais, who was the father of Munshi Madholal.

Chourah Ballu : Named after a person named Ballu who could not be identified. There is another place in the City called Balluji ki Furash, which also might have been named after the same Ballu.

Gow Mutt : The source of this name is unknown, although it might have been named for a monastery.

Bag Sundar Das : From a garden named after a rais called Sundar Das.

Gopal Mandir : Named after the famous Gopala temple (the baby Krishna) situated in this locality.

Raja Daal Chand : Named after a local Jain rais named Raja Daal Chand, also noted in the 1781 List of Mahallas.

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Mahalla Gokul Chand Shaw : Named after the famous shroff, Gokul Chand.[46]

Mahalla Nala Bula : This is the same Bula Nala found in the 1781 List of Mahallas.

7. Ghee Hatta Chubootra Ward :

This ward derived its name from a *ghee* (clarified butter) market-place. Consisting of 18 mahallas, 16 are listed here :

Ghee Hatta : See above.

Luckme Kunda : From a kunda named after the goddess Lakshmi, consort of Lord Vishnu.

Gosain : Named after a monk.

Surya Kunda : From a kunda named after the Sun-god—Surya.

Chhota Pan Dariba : From a small betel market. (See 1781 List of Mahallas.)

Baḍa Pan Dariba : From a larger betel market. (See 1781 List of Mahallas.)

Gadain Tola : Named for a colony of *gadain*, that is, handicraft workers. (See the list of professions in Chapter IX—Economy.)

Dhal Gheer ki Masjid : Named for a mosque constructed by Sheikh Khudabaksh, a famous Muslim merchant of the City.

Kali Mahal : Named for the goddess Kali.[47]

Sarai Govardhan : From an inn named after Govardhan, the son of Raja Todarmal, one of the famous officials of Emperor Akbar.[48]

Dubgur Tola : See the Mahalla List of 1781.

Badaji Tola : Named for a deity.

Jooranam Shaw ki Koonhe (*kona* ?) : Derived from a place named after a rich man, who could not be identified.

Baḍa Deo : Named for the deity Muchkundeshwara, popularly known as Baḍa Deo.[49]

Kussab Tola : Named for a colony of *kassab*, or butchers.

Bag Mohan Lal : From a garden which was named after a person who may be one Mohanlal, the Gujarati banker who provided certified testimony at Hastings' impeachment.

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8. Chubootra Chet Ganj Ward (See the 1781 List of Mahallas) :

This ward consisted of 18 mahallas, all of which are noted here.

Nakhas : From a cattle market-place (*nakhas*).

Sapt Sagar : From the *kunda* of Sapta Sagar (seven seas), by taking dip here, it was believed a person would gain the merit of having taken a dip in the seven seas.[50] Chatuh Samudrakup is said to have existed here.

Bhut Bhairo : Named for an attendant of Shiva, whose traditional name is Bhishana Bhairava.

Kashi Pura : From the temple of the deity of Kashidevi.[51]

Haqqaq : Named after a colony of *haqqaq*, artisans who cut and polished gems (lapidiars).

Ballua : From a market-place or storehouse for *balua* (sand).

Chhoti Piari : *Piari* means beloved. According to some, Raja Balwant Singh kept two mistresses, called *Baḍi* (senior) Piari and *Chhoti* (junior) Piari by the local people. The mahalla was named after Chhoti Piari, who had a residence there.

Benia : Named after the Triveni or Beni Tirtha.

Bag Madho Das : From a garden named after Madho Das, a local rais.

Gauḍ Khanneh : The source of this name is unknown.

Kullekany Devi : Named for a goddess who could not be further identified.

Bazar Omrao Singh : From a market-place named after Omrao Singh, a local rais.[52]

Takia Aghorenath : Named for the seat of Saint Aghorenath, the famous preceptor of the *Aghoripanthis*.

Bazar Azaweb (Ajayeb ?) **Singh** : From a market-place named after Ajayeb Singh, a *bhumihar* by caste, who was appointed the *Naeb* of Varanasi in place of Babu Jagardev Singh.[53]

Bariar Singh : Named after a local rais who was also a bhumihar.

Kalin Bag : From a garden named after one Kalin.

Pitri Kunda : From a holy tank consecrated to ancestors.

Baḍi Piari : See the entry for Chhoti Piari above.

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9. Chubootra Ram Ghat Ward (east of Sudder):

This ward got its name from a ghat named for the deity, Lord Rama. It consisted of 17 mahallas, 15 of which are listed below. (As most of these mahallas are named after ghats, please see Chapter VIII—The Ghats, for additional information, unless otherwise noted.)

Tripur Bhairavi Ghat : From the ghat associated with the deity, Tripur Bhairavi.*

Man Mandil Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Mir Ghat : Ditto

Lalla Devi Ghat : Ditto

Jalsayee Ghat : Ditto

Manikarnika Ghat : Ditto

Bedeshwar Ghat : Ditto

Sankata Ghat : See the 1796 List of Mahallas.

Chore Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Mangala Gouri Ghat : Ditto

Pancha Ganga Ghat : Ditto

Madho Ray Ghat : Ditto

Raj Mandil : Previously mentioned.

Butchye Tola : The source of this name could not be found.

Prahlad Ghat : See the 1796 List of Mahallas.

10. Chubootra Shivala Ward (south of Sudder Chubootra) :

Named for a temple of Shiva.

Bazar Shivala : From a market-place named after the temple of Shiva.

Asi Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Hingua : From a big lake named Hingua, which might have been named after a tank (*kunda*) called both Hayagriva and Hayagriva Kunda.

Bhadaini : Bhadaini was possibly the deity Bhadreshwara Shiva, whose image was installed above the Tulsi Ghat.[54] According to another opinion, the name was derived from Bhadraban.

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* See the entry for Tripura Bhairavi under the 1796 List of Mahallas.

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Oudh : Named after a settlement of people from Ayodhya.

Bazar Kedar Ghat : From the market-place on the ghat near the temple of Kedareshwara Shiva.[55]

Bazar Hanuman : From the market-place named after the deity of Hanumana.[56]

Bazar Kinaram : From a market-place named after Baba Kinaram, a famous monk of the *Aghori* sect of the seventeenth century.

Shivala Ghat : See the 1796 List of Mahallas.

Mussan Ghat : From a burning ghat situated here, which was named Harishchandra Ghat later on.

Krim Kunda : From a *kunda*, situated by the site of Krimichandeshwara Shiva.[57]

Bazar Daljit Singh : From a market-place named after a rais of that name.

Bazar Sarnam Singh : Also from a market-place named after a rais of that name.

Takia Shah Kamal : Named after the place of an unidentified Muslim saint.

Lolark Chhat : From the deity of the Sun-god, Lolarka, who was believed to have been pleased at the sight of Kashi. For details of a fair held here, see Chapter VII—Fairs and Festivals.

Bag Durvijay Singh : From a garden named after Durvijay Singh, who married the daughter of Raja Balwant Singh's son-in-law.

Hatta Kalwaran : From the quarter (*hatta*) where distillers and sellers of liquors and spirits, or *kalwars*, lived.

Talao Panker : Actually this is Talao Pushkar, a holy tank named after the famous tank of the same name in Rajasthan.[58]

11. Chubootra Durga Kund Ward (south of Sudder Bazar) :

This ward of at least 13 mahallas was named after a kunda, or holy tank, dedicated to the goddess Durga, whose temple is situated on the bank of the kunda.

Kashmiri Ganj : From a market-place named after the famous shroff, Lala Kashmiri Mall, and not after the settlement of Kashmiris, as some believe.

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Sarai Kazi : From an inn named after a Kazi, who might be Maulana Wazir Ali Khan, the Kazi-ul-Kazat of Varanasi.

Ghasiara Tola : From the colony of *ghasiara*, or grass-cutters.

Kurchutter (actually, Karchovar) : Named after a colony of embroiders (*karchovar*).

Talao Ram Ray : From a tank named after a Ram Ray, who could not be identified.

Bag Mela Ram : From a garden named after a person who could not be identified.

Hanuman Pura : Named after the deity Hanumana.

Shankh Dhara : From 'Shankha Tirtha'.[59]

Chhawoni Pratap Rudra : From an encampment of one Pratap Rudra, who could not be identified.

Nawab Ganj : From a market-place set up by Nawab Saadat Ali.[60]

Bag Kashmiri Mall : From a garden named after the famous shroff, Lala Kashmiri Mall.

Bag Beloria : From a garden where many *Bel* (wood-apple) trees were planted. According to local testimony, this garden was owned by Rani Bhavani of Bengal who kept a house, called *Vilwavatika*, here. Leaves of the Bel trees in this garden were used for the worship of deities installed by Rani Bhavani in Varanasi.[61]

Sukul Pura : Named after the surname (Sukul) of an unidentified person.

12. Chubootra Ramapura Ward :

There are diverse opinions about this naming. Most probably, it was named after the deity Ramachandra. Another opinion is that it was named after Ramchand, a king of Varanasi. This ward consisted of 13 mahallas of which a mere 6 are listed.

Bazar Bag Kamickya : From a market-place called after a garden in the name of the goddess Kamakhya.[62]

Talao Shitala : From a tank (*talao*) named after the goddess Shitala.

Bag Rani Bhavani : From a garden named after Rani Bhavani.

Bazar Sadananda : From a market-place named after a shroff or a *munshi* named Sadananda, who served Balwant Singh or Chet Singh.

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Bag Pareshnath : From a garden named for the famous Jaina *Tirthankara*, Parshvanath, who was born here. A Jaina monastery is located here.

Reuri Talao : A very big tank named after Revatishwara, the Lord of *Revati*, the twenty-seventh *nakshatra*, which is composed of thirty-two stars according to Hindu scriptures.[63]

13. Chubootra Jagat Ganj Ward :

The source of this name was a market-place set up with the spoils from Saranath by Babu Jagatdev Singh, who was appointed *Naeb* in place of Durgvijay Singh. This ward consisted of 15 mahallas.

Jagat Ganj : See above.

Pishach (*pichash*) **Mochan** : *Pishach* has been corrupted into *pichash*. According to the *Kashi Khandam*, Valmiki, a great sage who was living and meditating there, sympathized with a suffering spirit (*pishacha*), who, at his insistence, took a dip in this kunda and was liberated from his condemned state.[64]

Lalla Pura : Possibly from a Muslim named Ansara Lalla, a weaver by trade.

Dargah Fathman : From a tomb (*dargah*) possibly in memory of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammed, 'Fatima' has been corrupted into 'Fathman'. This dargah is said to have been erected by Sheikh Ali Hazi, the famous saint and poet who came to the City from Persia in 1750. Ali Hazi cherished a genuine love for this City and was loved by Muslims and Hindus alike.[65]

Chitrakut : From Chitrakut, a hill mentioned in the epic *Ramayana*. Episodes of the *Ramayana* used to be enacted in different parts of Varanasi on the occasion of the Ramlila festival. Here the episode of the meeting between Rama and Lakshmana, with their brother Bharata is being enacted.

Kerani Ganj : From a market-place of the grocer (*kirana*).

Dargah Chandan Shahid : From a tomb named after a Muslim saint who perhaps lived in the City during the time of Emperor Jahangir.

Bag Shankar Pandit : From a garden named after Shankar Pandit who was appointed the Naeb of Varanasi in 1787.[66]

Bag Gopal Das : From a garden named after the famous shroff, Babu Gopal Das, who held negotiations with both the English and the Marathas.

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He had lending houses in both northern and southern India and also in Gujarat.

Nati Imli : From a dwarfed tamarind tree, or *imli*.

Dhup Chandy : Named for a female deity of the same name. She has also been referred to as Dhruvachandi and Bhimachandi.[67]

Lahura Vir : Named for a local demigod or hero.

Lachman Bag : From a garden named after one Lachman, who could not be identified.

Chauki Ghat : Possibly from a post at the ghat from which octroi (a duty tax) was collected. See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Bag Telia : From a garden named after *telis* (oilmen).

14. Chubootra Alaipura Ward (North of Sudder) :

The Chubootra derived its name from Alvi, a distinguished family, of which, Maliq Afzal Alvi headed troops and settled in Varanasi around 1029 Hizri.[68] His tomb was in Alaipura. This ward consisted of 28 mahallas :

Alai Pura : See former entry.

Jamaluddin Pura : Named after Jamaluddin Ahmed, who was the *Subedar* of Varanasi, during the rule of either Qutbuddin Aibak or Ghiyasuddin Balban, the Delhi Sultans.[69] According to another opinion, he was appointed the Subedar of Varanasi by Muhammad Ghori in 1194 AD. Jamaluddin's tomb was in this locality.

Khwaja Pura : Named for Khwaja Muhammad who was the Governor of Varanasi during the reign of Jahangir, the Mughal emperor. He constructed a mosque called Khwaja Maszid and also a well called Khwaja Ka Kua at Chettanpura.

Kamal Pura : Named for a Muslim who could not be identified.

Ashman Pura : Actually, Osmanpura, which had been named after Osman Khan, the Governor of Varanasi during the rule of the Afghan Emperor Sher Shah Suri.

Adhun : The source of this name is unknown.

Jinda Pura : The source of this name is unknown.

Rasul Pura : Possibly named after a Muslim saint named Rasul, who lived here.

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Oury Pura : From the grave of Ori Baba, which was in a mosque in this locality.

Kumun Ghura : The actual name was probably Kamal Gadha, so named for the abundance of lotus flowers in local ponds.

Dosi Pura : Possibly named for a Muslim saint named Dosi.

Kazi Pura : Named after a Muslim judge, or *kazi*, who could not be identified.

Bag Fatman : From another garden named for Fatima, daughter of Prophet Muhammed. Prince Jehander Bakht constructed this garden in 1226 Hizri.

Nati Imli : A duplication of the Nati Imli Mahalla. See the 1796 Mahalla List.

Bag Abdullah Jung Ali : From a garden (*bag*) named after a Sufi Muslim saint who lived during the rule of Aurangzeb. He built this garden in 1675 Hizri and called it Gulzar Bag.

Bag Mirza Kulwully Beg : From a garden named after Kulwully Beg, perhaps identical with Kalb Ali, who served Raja Mahipnarain Singh of Varanasi, and took the lease of some of the parganas of Varanasi.[70]

Lukhee Ghat : From a ghat now called Nakhi. The reason for this name is not known.[71]

Sackir Talao : Shakkar, the daughter of Ray Suddhan, the Hindu governor of Jajnagar, was said to have lived here. Firuz Shah Tughluq, the Delhi Sultan, possibly constructed a well named for Shakkar for reasons unknown and the mahalla was named after the well.

Nag Kuan : From a well dedicated to the deity of Karkotaka, a snake (*nag*).[72]

Dargah Gazi Mian : From the tomb of Gazi Mian whose actual name was Masud Salar Gazi. He was a contemporary of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni.

Rammem Pura : The source of this name is unknown.

Jait Pura : Its former name was Jaichand Pur, which was associated with Jaichand, the Gahadwal King. According to another opinion, it was named after one Jetu, who was once a chief of Varanasi.

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Ausan Ganj : From a large market-place named after Ausan Singh, the Dewan of Raja Chet Singh.

Isur Gungi : Possibly from a sacred tank called Agnidhara or Agnishwara Kunda. According to another opinion, the original name was Ardhagangesh.

Gopal Pura : Named after one Gopal who could not be identified.

Naya Pura : From a newly established settlement.

Jumen Pura : The origin of this name is unknown.

Dighi : Possibly named after a large pond (*dighi*).

15. Chubootra Suray Heat Ward :

Derived its name from an inn. This ward consisted of 15 mahallas, 14 of which are listed here :

Ambar Pura : For a person named Ambar who could not be further identified.

Kajack Pura : This may be identified with *Kazzapura*. Perhaps it was named after robbers who once lived in the forest of this area.

Jalali Patti : Possibly named after Jalaluddin Ahmed.

Saryea : Possibly from an inn.

Kunia : Possibly derived from *kona*, which means a corner.

Saratabad : This was actually Saryatabad. Makdum-Shah-Tayyab Banarasi lived in Maduadih and his tomb was there. His disciples named the place Saryatabad in loving memory of their preceptor who died in 1043 Hizri.

Ghat Pul (old) : From an old bridge over the Varuna River.

Nakhra Ghat : From a ghat.

Imambarha : From a yard in which Muslims of the Shia sect used to keep their *tazias*. It was built after a model of the tomb of Imam Husain.

Bag Kunju Mali : From a garden named after one Kunja Mali, who was perhaps a gardener (*mali*).

Dargah Chandan Shahid (near the Varuna) : There is another mahalla with the same name under Ramapura Ward.

Pulungeea Shahid : Named for a Muslim saint named Palangia whose tomb was here.

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Lat Bhimsen : From a *lat*, a thick lofty pillar, which was consecrated to the immensely strong and powerful Bhimsena of the epic *Mahabharata*.[73]

Pegumber Pura : From the *Paighambar*, another epithet awarded to the Prophet Muhammed.

1809 LIST OF MAHALLAS

The Varanasi Magistrate, E. Watson, included a detailed account on the assessment of local watchmen of the City with a letter addressed to William Cracroft, Registrar to the Court of Circuit, for the Division of Benares, on August 5, 1809.[74] In that statement we get the names of 133 mahallas without any reference to the wards they belonged to. Among these 133 mahallas, 83 mahallas have already been found in either the 1781 or the 1796 Lists of Mahallas in the foregoing pages. The remaining 50 mahallas are described below :

Banbir Shahid : Identical with Babur Sahid. This mahalla was named after a Muslim saint named Banbir whose tomb existed here.

Gali Dedh Mall : Named after a lane associated with a rais, possibly a Punjabi Kshatri by caste.

Kaunbhut Ganesh Diksit : Named for one Ganesh Dikshit who could not be identified.

Ranaji : Possibly named after one *Rana* of Udaypur.

Bhikhari Das : Named after Bhikari Das, a famous shroff of 17th century Varanasi.

Gali Lutto : From a lane named after the famous pillar of *Bhairava*, popularly known as Lat Bhairo.

Brahmapuri Phul Bai : From the residential quarters for Brahmins (*Brahmapuri*), consecrated by Phul Bai, perhaps a Maharashtrian lady.

Brahmapuri Ahalya Bai : From the brahmapuri constructed around 1785 by Rani Ahalya Bai, the illustrious Maharashtrian Queen of Indore, for the Maharashtrian Brahmins.

Gopal Das Sahu : Named for the famous shroff of the City. A mahalla named after his garden was mentioned earlier.

Murli Tumako Furosh : Its origin is unknown.

Govind Pura Raja Bazar : Named for one Govind who could not be identified.

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Brahmapuri Nathu Sahu : From a brahmapuri constructed by Nathu Sahu.

Gali Khudeyrumal : From a lane named after one Khaderu Mall who could not be identified.

Ticket Ray : Named after a person who could not be identified.

Barah Baljore Singh : Named after a person who could not be identified.

Bag Bhandari : From a garden named after a person who could not be identified.

Gali Himmat Bahadur : From a lane possibly named for Himmat Bahadur who was consulted by Mirza Rahim Beg and Diwan Madho Rao for reinstating Raja Chet Singh in the fort of Ramanagar after the retirement of Warren Hastings from the City.[75]

Gali Sukul : From a lane named after the surname of a person who could not be further identified.

Chupria Tola : Persons who refined lac (*chapḍa*) were called *chupḍias*. This mahalla was named after a colony of such persons.

Birji Sahu : Named after a person who could not be identified.

Gali Sheoram Bhat : From a lane possibly named after a Gujarati who could not be identified.[76]

Dharm Pur : The source of this name is unknown.

Prannath Tewary : From a person who could not be identified.

Bauli Kalbhyro : From a large, stepped well, named after the deity Kala Bhairava.[77]

Puntia Tola : For a colony named after the landlord of Puntia of Bengal who had a mansion and *satra* here.

Nawab Manir-ud-Daulah : In and after 1787, the family of the Nawab of Oudh used to live in the Durga Kunda area. Nawab Manir-ud-Daulah, after whom the mahalla was named, was a member of this Nawab family.

Muhta Tola : The source of this name is unknown.

Luchman Joshi : From a Maharashtrian of that name.

Koocha Mansaram : From a small lane named after one Mansaram.

Ucha Gali : From a lane that was elevated.

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Gali Muazzam : From a lane named after a Muslim who could not be identified.

Gali Bhat : From a lane named after a person who was possibly a Gujarati or Maharashtrian. Alternately, the lane may be associated with the residence of Bhats (bards).

Hazi Darslal Sund : Possibly named after a Muslim who could not be identified.

Deonath Pura (Khurd) : Deonathpura,the small. Possibly named after a Bengalee, or after a demigod. According to another view, it was formerly known as Deokashi, as many temples were situated here.[78]

Deonath Pura (Kallan) : Deonathpura,the big. See previous entry.

Kotwal Pura : From a *kotwal* (city magistrate), who could not be identified.

Agha Gir : Named after a Hindu monk who could not be identified.

Agha Ganj : From a market-place named after Agha who was appointed the Dewan of Jaunpur and Varanasi, by Emperor Jehangir.[79] According to another opinion, this mahalla was under the *zamindari* of one Agha Fakhruddin. There was a Fakhruddin tomb in this locality. Agha Sahib constructed a mosque here in 1221 AD.

Jnan Vapi : From the famous Jnanavapi, which means the 'well of wisdom'. It is situated just beside the present Vishwanatha temple.

Ash Bhairab : Named for a Bhairava, an attendant of Shiva, whose name was possibly derived from Asitanga Bhairava. Reverend Sherring found the temple of this deity near Surajkund around 1868.[80] *

Gali Omichand : From a lane named after one who could not be identified.

Brahmapuri Maldahia : From a brahmapuri in Maldahia where a fine stamped silk was manufactured.

Missir Pokhra : From a tank named after Mishra, the surname of a Brahmin.[81] According to another opinion, Missir Pokhra was derived from the Mishraka Tirtham, a holy tank, which represented the Naimisharanya Tirtha.

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* At present this is situated at the north of Chowk and south of Nichi Bag.

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Gali Chumpa Shahid : From a lane named after a Muslim who became a martyr; his grave was here.

Ghasiram Phatak : From a gate named after one Ghasiram, who could not be identified.

Gali Giridhari Mall : From a lane named after a person who could not be identified.

Sewackram Sadabarti : From a person who was an agent of a Hindu king and used to run an alms-house.[82]

Kotwal Pura : From an Indian Magistrate of the City who could not be identified.

Pandey Ghat : From a ghat named after Babua Pandey, an influential citizen of the City.[83]

1829 LIST OF MAHALLAS

For the first time in the history of Varanasi, James Prinsep took a systematic census of the City in 1829. This census records populations by mahallas. Thus, we get a detailed list of mahallas from that census. The following information is about those mahallas we find for the first time in Prinsep's census :

Abkari Hata : From a market-place where various kinds of spirits and liquors were sold.

Adi Vishveshwar : Named for the deity, Adi Vishveshwara.

Ama Mihr (Mishra ?) **Gali** : From a lane named after a person who could not be identified.

Atma Vireshwar : From Atma Vireshwara Shiva who was popularly known as Vireshwara Shiva.

Arab ki Masjid : From a mosque named after Arabia or a person or resident of Arabia, birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad, hence, the holy land of Muslims.

Badshah Ganj : From a market-place named after the descendants of the Mughal Emperors who settled in the City.

Bakharabad : This was in the Jaitpura Mahalla. The history of its name is not known.

Balua Vir : Named after a local demigod or hero.

Balam Das Bag : From a garden named after a person who could not be identified.

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B(M)adholal Pura : Named after a person who could not be identified.

Bandhu : The source of this name is not known. It was under Jaitpura Ward.

Bhutai Imli Bauli : From a large tank named after a tamarind tree that was believed to be haunted by ghosts. It was under Kotwali Ward.

Bhandaria Gali : The origin of this name is unknown.

Chohra (in Ausanganj) : Perhaps from a meeting place of four roads, or a *chouraha*.

Chamroti : The source of this name is not known, but was similar to Chamroutia in Secrole.

Cantonment : From the local Cantonment established by the British Government.

Dalip Ganj : From a market-place named after one Dalip who could not be identified.

Dandi Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Dhanipura : The source of this name is not known.

Dhanesra : From the Dhanadeshwara Kunda that existed here.

Dharam Kup : From a well (*kup*) of that name which existed here.

Duli Garha : From Dudhhi Gadhi that possibly derived its name from the Mahakala Kunda that was once here.

Dethura : It was situated in the Secrole area. This mahalla might have been named after an Englishman.

Ehia Vir (in Ramapura) : Named for a local demigod or a hero of that name.

Ferid Shahid : Named after a Muslim who could not be identified.

Gambhir Singh Baḍha : The source of this name was a cluster of houses (*baḍha*), which was owned by Babu Gambhir Singh, a *bhumihar* by caste and a rais.[84] It was situated in the Bhelupura Ward.

Govind Das Katra : A market-place named after a person who could not be identified. It was situated in the Bhelupura Ward.

Gouri Ganesh : Named after a deity of that name.

Gular Talao : A tank named after a person who could not be identified.

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Gangadhar Pura : Named after a person who could not be identified. It was situated in Secrole.

Grant Bazar : A market-place named after a European with that name.

Habib Pur Khas : Named after one Habib, a Muslim who could not be identified. It was situated in the Chet Ganj area.

Habib Pur Sarak (road) : See the previous entry.

Hankar Tola : Hankar was actually Shankar who might be either a deity or a person. It was situated in the Chet Ganj area.

Hathi Khanah : From an elephant (*hathi*) shed.

Hyder Ganj : From a market-place named after Hyder, a Muslim, who could not be identified.

Hyder Ali Hata : From a shopping area named after Hyder, perhaps identical with the Hyder of the previous entry.

Hynstale : The source of this name is not known. It was situated in the Jaitpura area.

Hugul Ganj : From a market-place named after Captain Ogle, the first commandant of the old British cantonment that was located on the side of the Varuna River. 'Ogle' was corrupted into 'Hugul'.[85] This mahalla was situated in Secrole.

Im Pur : The source of this name is not known.

Jageshwar : Named for the deity Yajneshwara Shiva, or according to another view, Agnidhreshwara Shiva.

Jyn Pura : The origin of this name is unknown.

Kazi ka Darwaja : From a *phatak* associated with a *kazi* (Muslim judge) who could not be further identified.

Kazi ka Gali : From a lane named after a kazi who could not be identified.

Kazi Pura : Named after a kazi who could not be identified. It was situated in the Sheikh Salim area.

Kazi Pura : Named after a kazi who could not be identified. It was situated in the Dashashwamedh area.

Kasiram Phatak : Named after a phatak associated with one Kashiram, a Hindu, who could not be identified.

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Khirki Darwaja : Named after a rear (*khirki*) phatak.

Koila Bazar : Named after a charcoal (*koila*) market-place.

Kotwal : Possibly after a city magistrate whose name is not known.

Kachi Bag : Named after a garden situated in Jaitpura Ward.

Kanhaia Lal Bazar : From the name of a market-place named after one Kanhaialal who could not be identified.

Khajuri : The source of this name is not known. It was situated in the Secrole area.

Lalla Pura : The origin of this name is not known.

Lala Sand (Chand ?) **Gali** : From a lane named after a Hindu rais. It was situated in the Kotwali area.

Lachi Pura : Named for either a female deity or a person who could not be identified. It was situated in the Secrole area.

Ladhen Pura : The source of this name is not known, but was probably identical with the Luddhanpur in the Jaitpura area.

Lahan Pura Khas : From *lahanga* (petticoats and other under-garments for women), that were stitched and dyed in this locality. This mahalla was situated in Dashashwamedh Ward. There was another mahalla with the same name in the Chet Ganj area.[86]

Lahan Pura Sarak (road) : See previous entry.

Lakhi Chubootra : From a market-place named after Lakshmi, the goddess of beauty and wealth.

Madholal Pura : Named after a person who could not be identified.

Malai Tola : The source of this name is not known, though it might have been originated in relation to a colony of boatmen.

Maan Ray Gali : From a lane named after one Maan Ray, who could not be identified.

Maan Pura : Named after one Maan who may be identical with the Maan of the previous entry.

Markanda Sukul Brahmapuri : Named for a brahmapuri set up by one Markanda Sukul who could not be identified.

Mir Jan ke Bag : From a garden owned by Mir Jan, a Muslim who could not be identified further. It was situated in Dashashwamedh Ward.

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Moni ka Gali : From a lane named after one Moni who could not be identified.

Maulvi Bazar : The source of this name was a market-place named after a *maulavi*, a Muslim clergyman who remains otherwise unidentified.

Munshi Gali Phatak : From a gate of a lane named after one unidentified *munshi*.

Murgia Tola : Possibly from a locality where hens (*murgi*) were available.

Masjid Gali : From a lane where a mosque was situated. The mahalla was situated in the Jatanbar area.

Nachni Kuan : From a well, but why it was called *nachni* is not definitely known. There is, however, a story that a dancing girl committed suicide by drowning herself in this well, which was situated in the Adampura area.

Nadeshwar : Named for Nandeshwara Shiva. It was situated in the Secrole area.

Narhar Pura : Named after one Narahari who could not be identified. It was situated in the Kotwali area.

Nawab Ganj : From a market-place associated with the Muslim chief, Saadat Ali Khan, exiled Nawab of Oudh. It was situated near the Missir-pokhra area.

Nega Pura : The source of this name is not known.

Naya Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Naya Pura : From a newly established settlement situated in the Ausanganj area.

Nayi Basti : Named for another newly established settlement. It was situated in the Ramapura area.

Nayi Basti : From yet another newly established settlement. It was situated in the Gouriganj area.

Orderly Bazar : From a market-place associated with the Indian orderlies of local British officials.

Pate Depwazah : Perhaps identical with the Pathan Darwaja, which was named after a phatak associated with local Afghans. It was situated in the Adampura Ward. According to another view, Pathan Darwaja is a corruption of *Pattandwar*.[87]

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Phulwaria : The origin of this name is not known. It was situated in the Adampura Ward.

Purani Adalat : From the old (*purani*) court (*adalat*) that was established here. This was behind the present Chowk Police Station.

Pontia Gali : Perhaps from a lane, Pontia Gali, in the Kotwali area.

Piaria Pokhri : From a pond (*pokhri*) that was in the Secrole area.

Raja Ram Gali : From a lane named after one Rajaram.

Rajrajeshwari Ghat : See Chapter VIII—The Ghats.

Salarpur Mahalla : The source of this name is not known. It was situated in Jaitpura Ward.

Salarpur Sarak (Road) : See the previous entry.

Send Pura : The origin of this name is not known. It was situated in the Chet Ganj area.

Sendpura Sarak (Road) : See the previous entry.

Shama Gali : It may be identified with Someshwar Gali, which was associated with Someshwara Shiva. It was situated in the Dashashwamedh area.

Siva Choudri Gali : From a lane named after one Shiva Chaudhri, who could not be further identified. It was situated in the Kotwali area.

Sohga Gaḍhi : The name of this mahalla was perhaps Rudravasa Tirtha. According to another opinion, a lady named Sohga constructed this pond (*gaḍhi*).

Secrole : The civil station of the local Europeans commonly referred to by one of its component villages.[88]

Sheo Pur Khas : Named after Lord Shiva or a local rais called Shiva. It was situated in the Dashashwamedh Ward.

Sheopur Pichli : See the previous entry. It was another section or extension of Sheopur Mahalla.

Civil Station : From a civil station of the local British Government.

Sadar Bazar : From a market-place that was quite large.

Udho Pura : The source of this name is not known. It was situated in the Jaitpura area.

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OBSERVATIONS ON MAHALLA NAMES

From the history of the names of the mahallas given above and also from the study of the tables (see the Appendix) showing a number of personages, deities, temples, market-places, phataks, professions etc., associated with the names of mahallas, we may make the following observations:

The City is essentially a religious one. Out of about 519 mahalla names listed, at least 150 mahallas had some religious association, in that they were named after temples, mosques, gods, goddesses, saints and the like. Again, Hinduism stands out as the prominent religion, since out of those mahallas with some religious association, 135 were associated with Hinduism. Islam was the second most prominent religion, since the remaining 15 of these mahallas were associated with Islamic tradition. And though there were a few mahallas associated with Jainism, like Pareshnath (Parshvanath) Mahalla, no name associated with Buddhism could be traced.

Shiva represented 19 of the mahallas associated with Hindu deities. It is also evident that the worship of other deities like Durga and her different forms, Lakshmi, Hanumana and Bhairavas, was also in vogue and that a good number of local demigods, such as Ahia Vira and Deoria Vira, were also worshipped.

The 1781 list of mahallas gives us only 62 mahallas, while the list of 1796 gives us as many as 365 mahallas and quasi-mahallas. It is evident that the former list is not as exhaustive as the latter, since it is not feasible that the City could have grown so vigorously within a 15-year period that the number of mahallas would have jumped from 62 to 365. The fact is that most of the mahallas mentioned in the list of 1796 had existed in 1781 and that the City was already quite large and populous in 1781, that is, the year of the British occupation.* Nevertheless, it is equally true that this large number of mahallas in 1796 indicates that after the British occupied the City, law and order were better maintained, bringing with it a rapid settlement of new people within a comparatively short period. Consequently, the City grew both vertically and horizontally during this period. New mahallas emerged both within and without the City, pushing its boundaries in all directions except east beyond the Ganga.

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* Perhaps the far more detailed divisions of mahallas in the 1796 list is the result of these being further divided into sub-divisions.

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The growth of mahallas under different wards in the 1796 list, such as Chet Ganj, Shivala, Durga Kund, Jagat Ganj and Surya Heat indicates the gradual extension of the City in its immediate outskirts. New settlements emerged on and around the sites of gardens and water-lines and vacant plots of land. For example, old gardens in Durga Kunda and the Ramapura wards were sites of new settlements along with those denoting newly established mahallas like Nayi Basti and Naya Pura.

With the British occupation of the City, naturally, new British and support settlements emerged in the Secrole area, and some mahallas took European names, such as Grant Bazar, Englishia Lane, Orderly Bazar, Civil Station, Hugul Ganj, etc. But the City's love for tradition becomes quite apparent when it is observed that hardly any of the old quarters gave in to a European name.

That the people of a particular profession lived preferably in a particular mahalla becomes apparent from names like, Dabgar Tola, Kundigar Tola, Haccac Tola, Sundia Mahalla, etc. This also throws light on some of the professions extant in the City. There were also quite a few mahallas named Brahmapuri, for example, Ahalya Bai Brahmapuri, Markanda Sukul Brahmapuri, Phul Bai Brahmapuri, showing that a good number of residential quarters had been constructed by the rich to be used only as residences for Brahmins. People from the same province also generally lived together, for example, the Madrasis, the Maharashtrians and the Bengalees lived in Hanuman Ghat, Durga Ghat and Bengali Tola respectively.

Again, most of the names of mahallas under Alaipura, Kazi Mandi and Telia Nala wards, having Muslim associations, strongly suggest that Muslims, as previously stated, lived together in a given area. Possibly, the Hindu-Muslim confrontations, almost from the beginning of the Muslim occupation of the City, and differences in lifestyles are the main reasons for their separate habitation. Nevertheless, there were also wards like Jagat Ganj where both the Hindus and the Muslims lived together. But mahallas in areas like Pakka Mahal were almost exclusively associated with Hindus and Hinduism, and consequently, hardly any Muslims lived there.

The extensive presence of mahallas with such names as hatta, chowk, ganj, katra, bazar, mandi (59 approx.), shows that the City abounded with shops and market-places catering to all sorts of needs of both the local people and visitors. It shows further that the City was a centre of business, trade and commerce.

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The names of mahallas associated with people of many different castes, religions, provinces, races and nationalities, professions, and having different economic, political, educational, cultural and religious backgrounds show that Varanasi was a cosmopolitan city, which, in this respect, was unique among other Indian cities.

The City, having mahallas associated with many temples, mosques, public gates, palaces, holy tanks and wells, gardens, alms-houses and inns, no doubt, offered a kaleidoscopic scenario few other cities could have offered.

People lived around the ghats along the Ganga; we find that there were as many as 29 ghats forming the nucleus of different mahallas. Innumerable lanes and by-lanes also form an important aspect of the layout of the City. There were at least 41 lanes after which different mahallas of the City were named.

Among the deported chiefs in the City, there were both Hindus and Muslims. They were given accommodation mainly in the south and south-west areas of the City. Thus, there were many mahallas with names associated to chiefs banished to Varanasi by the British Government.

The good number of mahallas named after phataks shows that there were innumerable phataks in the City keeping various quarters divided, and along with this, the *phatakbandi* system was in full operation. This system, based on the principle of self-administration, was another unique feature of this City.*

Finally, it may be said in support of the observations and hypotheses made above, that most have been corroborated by documents such as government records and travel accounts, as well as our own study of different aspects of the City.

AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE CITY

The buildings of the City varied from one-storey houses to multi-storeyed mansions. As regards materials, sandstone, brick and mud were used. Thus, there were houses made of either stone, brick or mud and *kothrees* made of either brick or mud. An idea on the number and types of houses in various mahallas around the turn of the nineteenth century may be formed from the Statement of Assessment for Local Watchmen for 1909 placed in the Appendix of Chapter X.

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* This has been dealt with in detail in Chapter X—Towards A Modern Municipality.

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From this statement we learn that the buildings with stone-slabs were concentrated in the inner zone of the City, while houses with mud-slabs and kothrees situated mainly in the City's outer zone.

One may wonder how the City looked then, with all its buildings, temples, water-points, gardens, open fields, streets, lanes etc. Here is a view of the City as seen by a Western traveller around the middle of the eighteenth century, from the Madhorai ka Dharahara, the *minar* of the Aurangzeb Mosque at Panchaganga Ghat :

> 'Looking down from the minarets, or some other commanding height upon the City of Benares, as it lies like a map beneath us, we are surprised by the stately gardens and spacious quadrangles occupying the ground between the high buildings which line the narrow streets, some of these secluded retreats are remarkably beautiful, surrounded by cloisters of stone, decorated with a profusion of florid ornaments, and flanked by some high towers, whence the most delightful prospect imaginable may be obtained of the adjacent country, with its fertile plains, umbrageous woods, and ever shining river.'[89]

TOWARDS A MODERN LAYOUT

The City maintained its medieval character, as well as the character of a temple-city, at the time of the British occupation and for a considerable period afterwards. The layout of a modern City was gaining ground in 'English' Varanasi, that is, in its northern and north-western periphery, where the British started settling and the Government offices and the cantonments were being set up.[90] But the heart of the City still remained unaffected in this respect. The modern layout was growing popular among some local people, which was noticeable at the time of the establishment of new settlements in the western and southern outskirts of the City. The construction of more than a few buildings over filled-in tanks or in place of old, dilapidated houses and mud-cottages around the City, also paved the way for a more modern layout, thereby, changing the façade of the City considerably.

APPENDIX

Mahallas in Evolution

List No. 1

1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
Sudder	1. Sudder Chubootra			
	Thatheri Bazar		Thatheri Bazar	Thatheri Bazar (Chowk)
	Soondia Mahalla		Sundya	Sundiya (Chowk)
Mint Gate (Sudder)*	Taksal			Purani Tankshal (Chetganj)
Nandan Sahoo-2ph**	Nandan Sahu	Nundan Saho-4ph	Nandan Sahu	
	Govind poora	Gobind poora	Govindpoora (big)	Govindpura Khurd (Chowk)
			Govindpoora (small)	Govindpura Kalan (Chowk)
			Govindpoora (sarak)	
	Bhooye lotan	Hatta Bhoulotan-10ph	Bhulotan	Bhulotan (Chowk)
Raj Mandil (Sudder)				
Raj Mandil (Ramapura)				
Raja Durwaja-1ph	Raja ka Durwaja		Raja Durwaja	Raja Durwaja (Chowk)
Karn Ghanta-2ph	Karn ghanta	Karanghanta-3ph	Karnghanta	Karanghanta (Kotwali)
				Katra Karanghanta (Chowk)
Machher hatta-8ph	Machherhatta	Machherhatta-3ph	Machherhata	Machherhatta (Chowk)
Silk Market (Sudder)	Resham katra		Resham Katra	Resham Katra (Chowk)
Gali Chandu Nye-3ph	Gali Chandoo Nye	Gali Chundoo Hazzam-3ph	Chandu Nai (gali)	Gali Chandu Hazzam (Chowk)
			Chandu Nai (khas)	
	Paut Bedeshwar			
	Gali Sookhlal Shaw	Sookhlaul Saho-7ph	Sookhlal Sah	
	Siddheswari	Siddheshwar-8ph	Siddheshwari	

* Names of places within brackets are those of wards and these indicate to which ward the respective mahalla belongs.
** ph=phatak

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Garhbasi tola	Garwasee tolah-8ph	Garwasi tola	
Kalka Gali-3ph	Kalka ki gali	Gali Kalka-3ph	Kalika gali	Kalika Gali (Dashashwamedh)
Coondigur Tola (Sudder)	Cundie gur tolla	Koonde Gur tolah-4ph	Kundi gar tola	Kundigar Tola (Chowk)
	Khazeh Casseem		Kasim Ali Khan Katra	
Bisheshar Mot (Sudder)	Bisseessor Nauth	Unnopoorna Bisseysurnauth-2ph	Visveswar gali	Gali Vishveshwarnath (Dashashwamedh)
Cachowry Gallee (Sudder)	Cutcherry Gully	Kuchouree Gullee-4ph		Kachouri Gali no.1 } (Chowk) Kachouri Gali no.2
	Raneka Well	Hunooman Chouraha		Rani Kunwa (Chowk)
Nypalee Hupra (Sudder)	Nepally Khaprah	Nepaulee Khaupra-2ph	Nipali Khapra	Nepali Khapra (Chowk)
	Surg Dooari			
Behem Nala (Sudder)	Birumh Nallah	Bramnaul-1ph	Brahmnal	Brahmanaal (Chowk)
Chouk (Sudder)	Chowk		Chowk	
	Coonjee Gully	Koonj Gullee Kullaun-4ph	Kunj Gali Khas	
		Koonj Gullee Khord-1ph	Kunj Gali Phatek	Chhoti Kunjgali (Chowk)
			Kunj Gali Chakla	
Lohory Tola-4ph	Lawhory Tolla	Luhoree Tolah-4ph	Lahori Tola	Lahori Tola (Chowk)
	Shawkhee Benaik		Sakshi Binaik	Sakshi Vinayak (Dashashwamedh)
Gulee Shukurkund-2ph	Gully Sakir Kund	Shukur Kund-2ph	Shakarkund gali	Sakarkand Gali (Dashashwamedh)
Teryneem (Telianala)	Tedhee Neem	Teyree Neem-3ph	Terhi Nim	Terhi Nim (Dashashwamedh)
	Mundye Judoo	(Kotwaulpoora)		Jaddupura (Dashashwamedh)
		Judoo Mundye-5ph		
	Houz Cattorah	Houz Kuttorah-4ph	Houz Katora Khas	Houz Katora (Dashashwamedh)
Ali Gunge-2ph	Ally Gunge		Houz Katora Sarak	
Phatuck Shukh Selem (Ramapura)	Fattuck Saik Sullain		Shekh Salim Phatek	Seikh Salim ka Phatak (Chowk)
Sheekh Selem Phatuck (Gheehatta)	Catra Nuckir Ullah Cawn			
Mundevee Dal (Sudder)	Dawlka Mundye		Dal ki Mandi	
	Hurhaw		Hadha Khas	Hadha (Chowk)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Mohla Thawn Sing		Harha Sarak	Sarai Harhha (Chowk)
	Pauther Gulleea	Puthur Gullea-2ph	Pathar Gali (Bhyronath)	Patthar Gali (Kotwali)
	Mohma ka Nalla	Chah Mehma-4ph	Mahima Indara	Chah Mahima (Chowk)
	Bhandarry Gully	Bhundarree Gullee-1ph	Bhandari Gali	Bhandari Gali (Kotwali)
	Mohla Hurnarrain			
Chubootra Dashashwamedh	2. Dashashwamedh			
	Chubootra Dussusmed (South of the Sudder)			
Dashashwamedh (Dashashwamedh)	Dussusmed		Dashashwamedh Khas	Dashashwamedh (Dashashwamedh)
			Dashashwamedh Sarak	
Derew Singh's House (,,)	Dingoor Se ka Pool			
August koonda	Access Coondoo	Ugust Koondah-15ph	Agust Kund	Agastya Kunda (Dashashwamedh)
Jungembary-3ph (,,)	Jungum Barry	Jungumbaree-3ph	Jangambari	Jangambarhi (Dashashwamedh)
	Havelley Muneear Singh	Haulee Muneear Singh-5ph	Manyar Sinh Houli	Manihari Tola (Dashashwamedh)
Gunga Mehal (,,)	Gunga Mahell	Gunga Muhul/ Deonauthpoora-2ph	Ganga Mehal	Ganga Mahal (Dashashwamedh)
Rouny Bhowanny's Phatuck (Dashashwamedh)	Havelly Ranee Bhowanny	Burmpooree Ranee Bhowanee-1ph	Rani Bhuwani Brahmpuri	Rani Bhavani ki Brahmapuri (,,)
Phatuck Chowsutty (Dashashwamedh)	Chowsuttee	Chousuttee Ghat-2ph	Chatushashti Ghat	Choushatti Bazar } (,,) Choushatti Ghat }
Ahlea Bye's Phatuck (,,)	Ahia Ka Bur	Bud Uheea-2ph	Ahila Bai Brahmpuri	
Ehya Beer (Dashashwamedh)	Komeel Giria	Keyal Geerea		
Seetla Ghat (,,)	Seetulla Ghatt			
	Chella poorah			
	Bidda Chuttar			
	Panchperooa			Panchopandua (Chowk)
	Barrah Neem			

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Kyut ka Neecheh			
	Brohum poory	Nicha Burmpooree-1ph	Nichi Brahmapuri	Nichi Brahmapuri (Dashashwamedh)
	Guddoresser			
Balmokind-4ph	Chowhatta Ballmokun			
	Chowhatta Seewen			
	Coonchek Kewul Geer	Keyal Geerea	Kewalgiria	Keval Gali (Dashashwamedh) } Keval Gali (Brahmapuri Ahalyabai)
		Burmpooree		
		Uheela Baye-4ph		
	Burrah Coondoo			
		Gulle Gunneysh-1ph	Ganesh Gali	Ganesh Gali (Kotwali)
	Gonaish		Ganesh Mehala	Ganesh Mahal (Dashashwamedh)
		Gunneysh-5ph		
	Coonchek Morhatta			
	Coonchek Gossain			
Jugjewpoora(Dashashwamedh)	Jugjeeunpoorah	Jugjeweenpoorah-2pl	Jagjewanpura	Jagjivanpura (Dashashwamedh)
	Kullish Poorah	Khaulispoora-6ph	Khalispura	Khalispura (Dashashwamedh)
Bengalee Tola-4ph	Bengally Tolah	Bengallee Tolah-9ph	Bengali Tola	Bangali Tola (Dashashwamedh)
	Teepoor Bhurroye		Tripur Bhyravi	Tripura Bhairavi (Dashashwamedh)
	Meer Ghaut	Meer Ghaut-3ph	Mir Ghat Sarak	Meer Ghat (Dashashwamedh)
	Baug Muniar Sing			
Sonorpoora (Dashashwamedh)	Sonaur poorah	Sonarpoora-3ph	Sonarpura	Sonapura (Bhelupura)
Sonarpoora (Ramapura)				
	Harrokee Baug	Baugh hara (Khurd)-1ph	Hara bagh	Bag Harha (Bhelupura)
		Bugh hara (Kullan)-3ph		
Maan Serwer (Dashashwamedh)	Maun Surwur		Man Sarwar	Man Saravar (Bhelupura)
	Havelly Lalloo			
	Havelly Moniar Sing			
	Peetumber poorah		Pitambarpura	Pitambarpura (Bhelupura)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
Kalbhyro Chubootra	3. Chubootra Bhoyronauth (West of the Sudder)			
Chubootra (Kalbhyro)-4ph	Bhoyronauth	Bhyronauth-4ph	Bhyronath Khas	
			Bhyronath Sarak	Bhyro Bazar (Kotwali)
			Bhyronath Bazar	
Jytunbur (Kalbhyro)	Jutten Bur		Jytanber	
	Beeby Hatteea	Beebee Hutteah-1ph	Bibi hatia	
Rauji Mundil (Kalbhyro)	Raje Mundil	Raujmundil-4ph	Rajmandil Mehala	
Rauje Mundil (Gheehatta)			Rajmandil Pushta	Rajmandir (Kotwali)
			Rajmandil Bazar	
Guy Ghat (Kalbhyro)	Gye Ghaut (in town)	Goy Ghaut (Boochaye Tolah)-4ph	Gai Ghat	Gai Ghat (Adampura)
	Cattooa poorah		Ketwapura Sarak	Katuvapura (Kotwali)
			Ketwapura Khas	
	Chouck (New Chowk?)			
	Bhararia	Bhandrea Tolah-1ph		
Hurterret (Gheehatta)	Hurteeruth		Hanstirath Khas	Harteerath (Kotwali)
			Hanstirath Sarak	
	Hathmully			
	Catre Bharamul		Behara Mak Katra	
	Naick Bazar		Naik ka Bazar	
	Mullkee Mohla		Molki Tola	
	Peepul Mohery		Manhari pipal	
	Haloo Ghur			
	Mohla Moolchund			
	Mohla Chowdhory			
	Boochye Tolah	Boochaye Tola (See also Goy Ghat)	Buchai tola	Buchai Tola (Kotwali)
	Hriday Biloss	Haujee Durs-1ph		Haji Daras (Kotwali)
	Rutton Futtock		Ratan Phatak	

1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Bazars Bawolee Bheekee Roy			
Ghaussy Tola-2ph	Ghassee Tola	Ghausee Tolah-3ph	Ghasi Tola	Ghasi Tola (Kotwali)
Gunesh Chumrea-4ph	Gonaish Chumreea	Gunneysh Chimrea-4ph	Ganesh Chameria	Gali Ganesh Chamria (Kotwali)
	Mohla Govind Naik	Gobindjee Naik-4ph	Gobind Naik Mehala	Jitaji Govindji Nayak (,,)
Dood Beynay-2ph	Doodh Benaick	Doodh Benaik-4ph	Dugdh Binayak	Dudh Vinayak (Kotwali)
	Mongla Goury			
Madhoray-1ph	Madhoo Roy	Madhoram(y?)-4ph	Madhoray Mehala	Madho Ray (Kotwali)
	Doorga Gaut			
	Chouch Dadoojee	Chouk Dadoojee-1ph	Dadu Chowk	Dadul Chowk (Kotwali)
	Narain Decheet	Niraine Ditchit-4ph	Narain Diksit	Narayan Dikshit (Kotwali)
	Mohla Teja Sing			
	,, Rama Joshi			
	,, Modun Mohun	Gulee Mudun Mohan-1ph	Maden Mohen Gali	Kucha Madanmohan gali (Kotwali)
	,, Bindrabun Janee	Bindraban Jaunee-2ph	Brindaban Jani	
Mussaun Ghaut (Rampura)	Bazar Shess Mohun		Sheshman Bazar	
	Raje poorah		Rajupura Mehala	Rajapura (Kotwali)
			Rajupura Sarak	
Daranagar (Kalbhyro)	Daranagur		Daranagar Khas	Daranagar (Kotwali)
			Daranagar Sarak	
	Madhoo Messer		Madhmeshwar	Maddhameshwar (Kotwali)
	Bridh Caul			
	Dubgur Tolah		Bridhkal Kua Khas	
			Bridhkal Kua Sarak	Vriddhakal (Kotwali)
	Mohlanauth			
	Mohla Mohumed Shoheed		Mohmed Seid	
	Mohla Rajan		Raja Ram Gali	
			(identical with Rajan?)	
Kauzy Mandi Chubootra	4. Chobootra Kauzy Mandi			
	(North of the Sudder)			
Chubootra (Kauzy Mandi)	Cauzee Mundoye		Kazi ki Mandi	

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Nyee Bustee		Nyi Basti	Nayee Basti (Chetganj)
Mundvee Aam(Kauzy Mandi)	Mundye Umbah		Ambiya Mandi	Mandi Amviya (Kotwali)
	Rouzeh Maddaur		Madar Tola	
Behleeah (Kauzy Mandi)	Behellua Tolla		Bahilia Tola	
	Chubootra Hossein Caur			
	Hossein poorah		Hoseinpura	Hasanpura (Adampura)
	Allumpoorah		Alempura	Alampura (Adampura)
	Chundoopoorah		Chandupura	Chandupura (Adampura)
Setempoora (Kauzy Mandi)	Cheetunpoorah		Chitanpura Khas	Chittanpura (Adampura)
			Chitanpura Sarak	
Nypoora (Kauzy Mandi)	Nyeepoora		Nya pura	Nayapura (Adampura)
Hunooman Phatuck (Kauzy Mandi)	Hunuooman Fattock		Hanuman Phatek	
	Azezun ka Mundye	Anaj ki Mundei-2ph	Azizan Mundi	
	Koyneear Tollah			
	Durga Chundun Shyed			
	Durga Kootub Shyed		Kutbar Seid	Kutban Shahid (Kotwali)
	Chich Tolah			
	Sullim poorah		Salimpura	Salimpura (Adampura)
	Mohla Mochodree		Matsyodari (Khas)	Machhodari (Kotwali)
			Matsyodari (Chamrauti)	
Termahaney (Kalbhyro)	Teer Mohnee			
Termahaney Khurd (Kauzi Mandi)				
Termahaney (Kauzi Mandi)				
Teleeanala Chubootra	5. Telleeanala's Chubootra (West of the Sudder)			
	Pehlad Ghat		Prehlad Ghat	

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Raje Ghaut		Raj Ghat	Raj Ghat (Adampura)
	Poorana Killah		Purani Kot (?)	
	Cancha Shuroya			
	Packa Shuroya of Sastaken			
Bhedawn (Teleeanala)	Mohla Bhodhoo		Bhadaun	Bhadau (Adampura)
	,, Sundhooa			
	,, Dallalun			
	,, Cangoe			
	,, Ghasseeara Tolah		Ghasiara tola	
	,, Muftee			
	,, Bhogut			
	,, Gunge Bhogut			
	,, Noorah Mehter			
	,, Laul Cawn		Lal Khan Mehala	Chouhatta Lal Khan (Adampura)
	,, Bhur Dooary		Bharat Duaji Khas	
			Bharat Duaji Sarak	
			Bharat Duaji Tola	
	,, Kayathaun			Kayastha Tola (Adampura)
	Goolzar Mohaul		Gulzar Mehal	Jergular (Adampura?)
	Mohla Cazee	Kauzee Tukee Allee Khaun	Kajipura	Phatak Kazi Taki Ali Khan (,,)
	Mohla Sudder		Sadar Mehala	Sadar Mahal (Adampura)
	Havelly Josser Cawn			
	Mohla Neel Cunt			
	Mohla Meer Audut			
	Bazar Lall Cawn		Lal Khan Chouhatta	
	Adahee Cangoorekee Mohzit		Arhai Kangura Mesjid	
	Bazar Chowhatta			
	Audumpoor		Adampura	Adampura (Adampura)
	Catra Daraseekoo			
Pataney Tola (Teleeanala)	Pytanee Tolah		Pythani tola	Pathani Tola (Adampura)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Hooncaulesser		Unkareshwar	Omkaleshwar (Adampura)
	Gadhee Sheikh			Suga Garhhi (Adampura)
	Mohla Nirkhee			
Chubootra (Teleeanala)	Telleea nallah		Telia nala	Telia Nala (Adampura)
	Mohla Pullow Daran			
	,, Sunterason			
	,, Buttao Shoheid		Bhutani Imli Bouli	
	,, Kumesser Mohadeo	Soomysur Mohadeo-1ph	Kameshwar	Kameshwar Mahadev (Adampura)
	,, Treelochun		Trilochan (Khas)	Trilochan (Adampura)
	(West of the Sudder)		Trilochan (Sarak)	
Phatuck Seray (Teleeanala)	,, Shuroya Ghaut			
	,, Nya Ghaut	Nyah Ghaut		
	6. Chubootra Chowkhamba			
	(East of the Sudder)			
	Chowkhambha		Chaukhambha	
	Fattuck Rungeel Doss	Rungeyl Doss-2ph	Rangil Das Mehala	Phatak Rajgil Das (Kotwali)
Punny Tola-4ph	Patnee Tolah	Putnee Tolah-3ph	Patni Tola	Patni Tola (Chowk)
Ram Ghaut-3ph	Mohla Ram Ghaut	Ram Ghaut-7ph		Ramghat (Kotwali)
	Gully Golah	Golah Gullee-2ph	Gola gali	Gola gali (Chowk)
	Mohla Mamadeo		Mamadeo	
	Gully Shedhmatta	Gullee Sidh mata-2ph	Sidhmata gali	Siddhamata gali (bhitri) } (Kotwali)
	Gully Sewuck Ram	Gullee Seetaram (?)-1ph		Siddhamata gali (bahri) } (Kotwali)
	Gully Mokeem	Mokimgunge		
		(Kauzee Tukee)-5ph	Makim Ganj	Mukim Ganj (Adampura)
Gowal Dass-3ph	Mohla Gowal Doss Shaw	Goaul Doss Saho-6ph	Gual Das Sah	Gwaldas Sah (Kotwali)
Sook Tola-4ph	Sooth Tolah	Soodh Tolah-4ph	Sut Tola	Sut Tola (Kotwali)
	Gully Shadhoo Lall			
	Mohla Chowrah Balloo			Balua Bahodur (Adampura)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Mohla Gowmutt			
	Baug Soonder Doss	Baugh Soondur Doss-2ph	Sundar Das Bagh	Bag Sundar Das (Kotwali)
			Sundar Das Sarak	
			Sundar Das Gali	
	Gopaul Mundeer	Naleh Boolah-5ph	Bula Nala	Bulanala (Kotwali)
Nandan Sahay's Mahalla (Sudder)	Mohla Nundun Shaw			
	„ Raja Daul Chund			
	„ Gokul Chund Shaw	Ghee Huttah-3ph	Ghihata	Gheehatta (Dashashwamedh)
Nalaboola (Sudder)	Mohla Nalleh Boola		Lakhsmi Kund	Lakshmikund (Dashashwamedh)
		Sooruj Koond-5ph	Suraj Kund	
Chubootra (Gheehatta)	7. Gheohatta Chubootra (West of the Sudder)			
	Gheohatta			
	Luchmee Coordoo	Arrungabad-7ph	Aurangabad Mehala	
	Mohla Gossayne		Aurangabad Sarai	
			Aurangabad Sarak	
	Mohla Surugo Coondo			
Pandereeba (Ghehatta)	Mohla Chota Paun Deriba			Pandariba (Dashashwamedh)
	Burra Paun Deriba	Caulee Muhul-1ph	Kali Mehal	Kali Mahal (Chetganj)
Aurangabad (Gheehatta)	Mohla Urungabaud		Goberdhen Serai	Govardhan ki Sarai (Chetganj)
			Goberdhen Sarak	
	Shuroya Urungabad			
	Garain Tolah			
	Dhal Gheer ki Mohjid			
	Mohla Cally Mohell		Barhadev	Barhadev (Dashashwamedh)
	Surroye Goverdhun			
	Dubgur Tolah			
	Barruje Tolah			
	Jooranaum Shaw ki Coonha			

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Mohla Burra Deo			
	Kussaule Tolah			
	Baug Mohun Laul			
	8. Chubootra Chetganj			
	Nakhass		Nakhas (Aurangabad)	Nakhas (Kotwali)
	Suput Sahgur		Sapt Sagar	Sapta Sagar (Kotwali)
	Bhooth Bhoyro			Bhutbhairav (Kotwali)
Cishipoor (Gheehatta)	Cashee poorah	Caushee poorah-2ph	Kasipura	Kashipura Sharki (Chowk)
	Mohla Huccak		Hakak tola	Hakkak Tola (Chowk)
	Do Balloa		Balua	
Dola Denanauth	Gola Dinnanauth	Golah Deenanauth-6ph	Denanath Gola	Gola Dinanath (bhitri) } (Kotwali)
				Gola Dinanath (bahri) } (Kotwali)
	Choota Peary	Peyree Khord-4ph	Piri Chhoti	Piyari Khurd aur Kala (Chowk)
	Mohla Beneea			Benia (Chowk)
	,, Baug Madhoo Doss	MadhoDoss Sameeaun-1ph	Madhao Das (Samia) ki Bagh	
			Madho Das Samia gali	
			Madho Das ki Sarak	
	,, Gaurh Khannah			
	,, Kullecany Davy			
Cheyte Gunge-2ph	Chyet Gunge	Cheyt Gunge-2ph	Chet Ganj Gola	Chetganj (Chetganj)
			Chet Ganj Sarak	
	Bazar Omaro Sing			
			Umrao Sinh Sarak	
			Umrao Sinh Bagh	
	Rouzeh Koveer		Kobir Choura Khas	Kabir Chowrha (Chetganj)
			Kobir Choura Sarak	
	Tokeea Ougheenauth			
	Bazar Azazeb Sing		Ajaib Sinh ka Bagh	
	Baug Burrior Sing		Baryar Sinh ki Bagh	Bag Bariyar Singh (Chetganj)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
			Baryar Sinh ki Sarak	
Bazar Baboo Pawsan Singh (Gheehatta)	Mohla Kalin Baugh	Baugh Hara Kullaun		
	Pitter Coondoo		Pitri Kund Mehala	Pitarkunda (Chetganj)
			Pitri Kund Sarak	
	Burra Peeary	Peyree Kullaun-6ph	Piri Bari	Piyari Kalan (Chowk)
			Piri Sarak	
	9. Chubootra Ramghat			
	Teepor Bhoroye Ghaut			
	Maun Mundil	Maun Mundil-3ph	Man Mandil	Manmandir (Dashashwamedh)
	Meer Ghaut	Meer Ghaut	Meer Ghaut (Khas)	
	Lulla Davey Ghaut		Lalita Ghat	
	Jul Sayme			
	Munkerneeka			Manikarnika Ghat (Chowk)
	Bedessur			
	Ram Ghaut			
	Shunkutta Ghat			
	Chore Gaut			
	Mungla Gowry Ghaut			
	Punch Gunga			
	Madho Roy			Ghat Madho Ray (Kotwali)
	Raje Mundil			
	Butchye Tolah			
	Gya Ghaut			
	Pehlaud Ghaut			
	10. Chubootra Shewala (South of the Sudder)			
	Bazar Shewala			Shivala (Bhelupura)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Ushee Ghaut			Assi Sangam (Bhelupura)
	Mohla Hingooa		Hingua	
	Mohla Bhadhanee		Bhadyni	Bhadaini (Bhelupura)
	„ Oudh		Awedh	Avadh Sharki aur Garvi (Bhelupura)
	Bazar Kedaur Ghaut			
	„ Hunoomaun			
	„ Kinna Ram			
	Shewalla Ghaut			
	Mussaun Ghaut			
	Creem Coondo			Krimkund (Bhelupura)
	Bazar Dulzeet Sing			
	Bazar Surnaum Sing			
	Tukeea Shaw Kamaul			
	Lullarukh Chaut			
	Baug Doorbejye Sing			
	Hatta Kalwaran			
	Talao Ponker			
	11. Chubootra Durga Kunda (South of the Sudder Bazar)			
	Doorga Coondo		Durga Kund	Durgakund (Bhelupura)
	Cashmeery Gunge		Kashmiriganj	Kashmiriganj (Bhelupura)
	Surroye Kazeh		Khojwa Serai	Khojwa (Bhelupura)
	Ghasseeary Tolah		Ghasiara Tola (Ramapura)	
	Mohlah Kurchutter			
	Talawo Ram Roy			
	Baug Mela Ram			
	Hunnoomaun poorah		Hanumanipura	Hanumanganj (Bhelupura)
	Shunkh Dhara			
	Chawonic Purtub Rooder			

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Nabob Gunge		Nawab Ganj (Durgakund)	Nawab Ganj (Bhelupura)
	Baug Cashmeery Mull			
	Baug Bellureea			
	Sookul poorah			
	Suroye Nundun			
Chubootra (Ramapura)	12. Chubootra Ramapoora			
	Ramapoorah		Ramapura Khas	
			Ramapura Sarak	Ramapura (Dashashwamedh)
			Ramapura Chota	
	Bazar Baug Kamicka		Kamaksha	Kamachcha (Bhelupura)
	Mohla Byej Nautha			
	Baug Beny Ram Pundit			
	Bheloopoorah		Bhelupur	Bhelupura (Bhelupura)
	Baug Chumput Roy			
	Talawo Setulla			
Raunny Bhowany's Well (Ramapura)	Baug Ranee Bhowanny			Bag Rani Bhavani (Dashashwamedh)
Bedanund's Bazar (Ramapura)	Bazar Sudanund		Sadanand Bazar	Bazar Sadanand (,,)
Lucksa (Ramapura)	Mohla Luckcha		Lakusar	Laksa (Dashashwamedh)
	Baug Paurusnauth			
Dowreea Beer (Ramapura)	Bazar Deoreeah Beer		Douriabeer	Douria Beer (Bhelupura)
	Reworiah Talawo		Reori Talao	Reorhi Talab (Bhelupura)
	13. Chubootra Juggat Gunge			
	Jugget Gunge		Jagat Ganj	Jagatganj (Chetganj)
	Peechash Mochun			Pishach Mochan (Chetganj)
	Lallapoorah		Lalanpura Khas	Lallapura Kalan } (Chetganj)
			Lalanpura Sarak	Lallapura Khurd } (Chetganj)

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Durga Fathman			
	Chitter Coote			
	Kerany Gunge		Karni Bazar	
	Durga Chunden Sohid			Chandan Sahid (Chetganj)
	Baug Shunker Pundith			
	Baug Gopaul Doss (saho?)			
	Nattee Emlies			
	Dhoop Chundy			Dhupchandi (Jaitpura)
	Lohora Beer			
	Luchmun Baug			
	Chawkee Ghaut			Chowka Ghat (Jaitpura)
	Baug Telleea		Telia Bag	Teliya Bag (Chetganj)
	14. Chubootra Alaipura (North of the Sudder)			
	Aleyepoorah		Alipura	Alaipura (Jaitpura)
	Jumaldeen poorah		Jamal-ud-din pura	Jamaluddinpura (Jaitpura)
	Khazeh poorah		Khajapura	Khwajapura (Jaitpura)
	Kumal poorah		Kamalpura	Kamalpura (Jaitpura)
	Aushman poorah			Osmanpura (Jaitpura)
	Adheen poorah			
	Jinda poorah			
	Rusool poorah		Rasulpura	Rasulpura (Jaitpura)
	Oury poorah		Auripura	Oraipura (Jaitpura)
	Kumun Ghura		Kaman Sarak	
			Kaman Garha	Kamman Garhha (Jaitpura)
	Dosee poorah		Dosipura	Dosipura (Jaitpura)
	Cauzee poorah		Kazipura (Alipura)	Kaji Sadullapura (Jaitpura)
	Baug Futtun (Fatiman?)			
	Nauktee Amly			

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1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Baug Abdul Junjally			
	Baug Mirza Kulwully Beg			
	Lukhee Ghaut			
	Suckeir Talawo			
	Naug Coonha		Nag Kuan	
	Durgah Ghazeemeea			
	Rammem poorah			
	Jeet poorah		Jytpura	Jaitpura (Jaitpura)
	Asaun Gunge		Ausanganj Bazar	Ausanganj (Kotwali)
			Ausanganj Siunarain's house	
	Isur Gunge		Iswargangi Khas	Ishwara Gangi (Kotwali)
			Iswargangi Sarak	
	Gopaul poorah		Gopalpura	Gopalganj (Jaitpura)
	Nya poorah		Nyi Basti (Iswargangi)	Nayapura (Jaitpura)
	Jumen poorah			
	Digheea		Digia	Digiya (Jaitpura)
	15. Chubootra Surya Heat			
	Omber poorah			
	Kujack poorah			
	Jallally putty		Jelalipura	Jalalipura (Adampura)
	Suryea			
	Cooneea			
	Suratabaud		Saretabad	
	Suryea Ghaut			
	Ghaut Pool (old)			
	Nakhra Ghaut			
	Emmambara			
	Baug Coonjoo Mally			
	Durgah Chundun Sohed			

1781	1796	1809	1829	1935
	Pulungeea Sohed Laut Bheemshein Pegumbar poorah			
Mehboose Khana-2ph Madanpoora-3ph Dood Mul-2ph		Madanpoora-6ph Gali Dedhmal-2ph	Madanpura Dirmal gali	Gali Dedhmal (Dashashwamedh)

List No. 2*

1809	1829	1935
Babur Shuhid-2ph	Babar Seid Mehala	Babar Shahid (Chowk)
Caunbhut Ganeysh-2ph	Ganesh Diksit	Gali Ganesh Dikshit (Kotwali)
Ranajee-3ph	Rana Mehal	Ranamahal (Dashashwamedh)
Bhikarree Doss-3ph	Bhikari Das	Bhikhari Das (Chowk)
Gulee Lutto-1ph	Latu ka gali	Lattu gali (Adampura)
Lauloo Soor-3ph	Lalu Sur	
Burmpooree Phoolbayee-1ph	Phulbari Brahmpuri	Brahmpuri (Kotwali) [Siddhamata Gali area]
Keyul Gurea Burmpoore		
Uhulea Baye-4ph	Ahila Bai Brahmpuri	Ahalyabai ki Brahmpuri (Dashashwamedh)
Gopaul Doss Saho-3ph	Gopal Das Sah	Gopal Das Sah (Chowk)
Moorlee Tumako Furosh-1ph	Murli gali	Murli gali (Chowk)
Gobind poora/Rajah Bazar-4ph		
Burrumpoora Nuthoo Saho-1ph	Nanu Sah Brahmpuri	Brahmpuri Nathu Sah (Dashashwamedh)
Gullee Khudeyromul-1ph	Khanderu Mal	Kucha Khaderumal (Chowk)

* Shows the names of Mahallas which have first appeared in 1809 according to data available.

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1809	1829	1935
Ticket Roy-3ph		Ticket Ray (Chowk)
Barch Buljore Singh-3ph		
Baugh Bhundaree-1ph		
Gullee Himmut Behadoor-1ph	Himet Behadur gali	Kucha Himmat Bahadur (Kotwali)
Gullee Sookul-1ph	Shukul gali	Shukal ki gali (Kotwali)
Chuprea Tolah-2ph	Chaparia Katra	
Birjee Saho-1ph	Birju Sah gali	
Gullee Sheorambhut-1ph	Siw Ram Bhat gali	
Dhurmpoor-1ph		
Praunnauth Tewary-1ph	Prannath gali	Kucha Prananath (Chowk)
Baolee Caulbhyro-1ph		Kal Bhairav (Kotwali)
Ponteea Tolah-1ph		
Nowab Muneer Od Doulah-1ph	Manirudoulah	Munaruddoulah (Chowk)
Mutha Tolah-2ph	Matha Tola	Matha Tola (Adampura)
Luchmun Josee-1ph	Lachmi Josi gali	Lachhman Joshi (Kotwali)
Gullee Munsaram-1ph	Mansaram gali	Kucha Mansaram (Kotwali)
Oocha Gullee-1ph	Unchi gali	Uncha gali (Kotwali)
Gullee Mouzum Khaun-1ph		Kucha Mouzzam Khan
Nundoo Fereah-1ph	Nandu Farya gali	Gali Nandfariya
Gulee Bhaut-2ph	Bhat Mehala	Bhat gali (Kotwali)
Haujee durs laul sund-2ph	Haji Das Mehala (Lalu sur)	
Deonath poora Khord-2ph	Deonathpura (chhota)	Devnathpura (Khurd) } (Dashashwamedh)
Deonanth poora Kullaun-2ph	Deonathpura (barha)	Devnathpura (Kalan) } (Dashashwamedh)
	Deonathpura (gali)	
Kotwaul poora	Kotwalpura	Kotwalpura (Dashashwamedh/Chowk)
(with Judoo Mundye)		
Ujeet Geer-2ph		
Agha Gunge-1ph	Agaganj Mehala	Aga Ganj (Jaitpura)
	Agaganj Sarak	
Geyaun Bafee-4ph	Gyan Bapi	Jnanavapi (Chowk)

1809	1829	1935
Rauj Geer Tolah	Raj Gir Tola	Rajgir Tola (Chowk)
Ass Bhyro-2ph	As-bhyro	Aas Bhairav (Chowk)
Gullee Aumee Chund-1ph	Ami Chand gali	Kucha Amichand (Kotwali)
Burmpoora		Brahmapuri (Kotwali)
Malduhee-1ph		Maldahiya (Kotwali)
Missir Pokhrah-6ph	Misra Pokhra	Mishrapokhra (Dashashwamedh)
Gullee Chumpa Shuhid-1ph	Champa Said	Kucha Champa Shahid (Chowk)
Ghauseeram Pau Tuck-1ph		Phatak Ghasiram (Chowk)
Gulee Geerdharee Mul-1ph		
Sheywukram Suaburtee-3ph		Gali Sevakram Sadavarti (Chowk)
Kotwal poorah-1ph		Kotwalpur (Chowk)
Paundey Ghat-2ph	Pande Ghat	Pande Ghat (Dashashwamedh)
Hanuman Ganj-2ph	Hanuman Ganj-East	Hanuman Ganj (Adampura)
	Hanuman Ganj-West	
	Hanuman Ganj-Sarak	

List No. 3*

	Abkari Hata	
	Adivisveswar	Adi Vishveshwar (Chowk)
	Ama Mihir gali	
	Anaj ki Mandi	
	Atma Bireswar	
	Arab ki Mesjid	
	Badshah Ganj	
	Bakharabad	Bakra Bad (Jaitpura)

* Shows the names of Mahallas which have first appeared in 1829 according to data available.

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1809	1829	1935
	Balue Bir	
	Balam Das Bagh	
	Bandholal pura	
	Bandhu	Bandhu (Jaitpura)
	Bhutahi Imli Bouli	Bhutai Amli (Kotwali)
	Bhandariya gali	
	Chohra (Ausanganj)	
	Chamroti (Secrole)	Chamroutiya (Sikroul)
	Cantonments	
	Dalepganj	
	Dundi (Hanuman) Ghat	
	Dhanipura	
	Dhanesra	
	Dharmkup	Dharmakup (Dashashwamedh)
	Duli Garha	Dulli Garhi (Kotwali)
	Dethura (Secrole)	Dithouri Mahal
	Ehia Ber (Ramapura)	
	Ehia Ber (Dashashwamedh)	
	Ferid Seid	Faridpura (Bhelupura)
	Gambhir Singh Bara	Barha Gambhirshigh (Bhelupura)
	Gogharana	Ghughrani gali (Chowk)
	Gobind Das Katra	
	Gouri Ganj (Bhelupura Ward)	Gouriganj (Bhelupura)
	Gouri Ganesh	
	Gular Tale	
	Ganga Dher pura (Secrole)	
	Grant Bazar	
	Habibpura Khas	
	Habibpura Sarak	Habibpura (Chetganj)
	Hankar Tola	Hankar Tola (Chetganj)

1809	1829	1935
	Hathi Khaneh	Hathi gali (Kotwali)
	Hyderganj	
	Hyder Ali Hata	
	Hynstall	Hainstel (Jaitpura)
	Hugulganj (Secrole)	Hukulganj (Sikroul)
	Impur	
	Jageswar	
	Jynpura	Jaypura (Chetganj)
	Kazi ka Darwaja	
	Kazi ki gali	
	Kazipura (Shekh Salim)	
	Kazipura	Kazipura (Dashashwamedh)
	Kasiram Patak	
	Khirki Derwazeh	
	Khojwa Serai	
	Koila Bazar	Koyla Bazar (Adampura)
	Kutwa	
	Kachibagh	Kachchi Bag (Jaitpura)
	Kanhyalal Bazar	Bag Kanhaiyalal (Chetganj)
	Khajuree (Secrole)	Khajuri (Sikroul)
	Lillapura	
	Lala Sand gali	Kucha Lalasur Shau (Kotwali)
	Lachipura	Lachchhipura (Sikroul)
	Ladhenpura	Luddhanpura (Jaitpura)
	Lahanpura Khas	Lahangapura Sharki aur Garvi (Chetganj)
	Lahanpura Sarak	
	Lakhi Chabutre	
	Malai Tola	
	Man Ray gali	
	Manpura	

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1809	1829	1935
	Markanda Sookul Brahmpuri	
	Mir Jan ke Bagh	Mir Bag (Dashashwamedh)
	Moni ka gali	
	Mulri Bazar (Maulali Bazar)	
	Munshi gali Phatck	Munshi Ghat (Dashashwamedh)
	Mungia Tola	
	Mesjid gali (Jytunbar)	
	Nachni Kuan	Nachni Kuan (Adampura)
	Nadeswar	Nadeshwar (Sikroul)
	Narharpura	Naraharpura (Kotwali)
	Nawab Ganj (Misirpokhra)	
	Negapura	
	Nya Ghat	
	Nyapura (Ausanganj)	Nayapura (Jaitpura)
	Nyi Basti (Ramapura)	Naye Basti (Dashashwamedh)
	Nyi Basti (Gouriganj)	
	Orderly Bazar	
	Pate Derwazeh	Patan Darwaja (Adampura)
	Phulwaria	Phulwaria (Adampura)
	Purani Adalat	
	Ponti gali	
	Piaria Pokhri (Secrole)	
	Paharpur (Secrole)	Paharhpura (Sikroul)
	Raja Ram gali	
	Rajrajeswari Ghat	
	Salarpura Mehala	Salarpura (Jaitpura)
	Salarpura Sarak	
	Sendpara	Senpura (Chetganj)
	Sendpara Sarak	
	Shama gali	Someshwar gali (Dashashwamedh)

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1809	1829	1935
	Siva Choudri gali	Siva Choudhri (Kotwali)
	Sohga Garhi	
	Secrole or Sikror	Sikroul (Sikroul)
	Seopur khas	Shivpura (Dashashwamedh)
	Seopur pichli	
	Civil Station	
	Sadar Bazar	
	Udhopura	Udhopura (Jaitpura)

List No. 4*

		Kabra Ashik Masuk (Dashashwamedh)
		Sigra (Dashashwamedh)
		Philkhana (Bhelupura)
		Hata Rohila (,,)
		Tilbhandeshwar (,,)
		Nai Bazar (,,)
		Duppepur (Sikroul)
		Chouka Ghat (,,)
		Ghaosabad (,,)
		Andhra ka Pul (,,)
		Rajabazar (,,)
		Bazar Jadid (,,)
		Miana Mahal (,,)
		Teliabag (,,)
		Englishia Lane (,,)
		Sidi Nandu (Adampura)

* Showing the names of Mahallas which were first found in a Mahalla List of 1935.

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1809	1829	1935
		Dewani Ganj (Adampura)
		Jugal Tola (,,)
		Teliyana (,,)
		Bangali Barha (Kotwali)
		Katra gali (,,)
		Kucha Madho Das (,,)
		Naya Pura (,,)
		Maidagin (,,)
		Barha Ganesh (,,)
		Bazar Annapurnaganj (,,)
		Vishveshwar Ganj (,,)
		Chhattatala (,,)
		Bhikhashah Pahalvan (,,)
		Bando Tola (Chowk)
		Kucha Vindhyachal (,,)
		Kagji Tola (,,)
		Katra Karnaghanta (,,)
		Hirapura (,,)
		Englishia Lane (Chetganj)
		Sharki aur Garvî (,,)
		Matakund (,,)
		Raghobir (,,)
		Maldahia (,,)
		Katihar (Jaitpura)
		Dohara (Jaitpura)
		Husainpura (,,)
		Nai Basti (,,)
		Sanan ki Bazar (,,)
		Basnia (,,)
		Khet Basmia (,,)

1809	1829	1935
		Kodai Chouki (Dashashwamedh)
		Kalan aur Khurd (,,)
		Sharki aur Garvi (,,)
		Munshi Ghat (,,)
		Lachhmanpura (,,)
		Dhruveshwar (,,)

N.B. Spellings of mahallas' names have been retained mostly as in the original lists.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. James Prinsep, *Census of the Population of the City of Benares*, Asiatic Researches, Vol. 17, p. 474.
2. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Vaibhava*, pp. 44 -58.
3. D. L. Eck, *Banaras: City of Light*, Appendix- II, pp. 355-57.
4. See the Table of Mahallas placed in the Appendix. For a linguistic study of the names of current mahallas of the City, see Sarit Kishori Srivastava, *Varanasi ke Sthannamon ka Samskritik Adhyayan* (Hindi)—1995, Vishvavidyalaya Prakashan, Varanasi.
5. *Ibid.*
6. In this venture, our main sources of valuable information have been a few knowledgeable and veteran Banarasis. Among them, Rai Krishnadas, the founder-director of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University, was most remarkable.
7. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 234.
8. A long list of people and places of residence shows that usually people of different castes and professions lived within the same quarter during the period under review. Magistrate's Office, Benares, August 7, 1852, COV.,Basta 131, Serial No.128 (1), pp. 269-79; Judicial (Criminal) Proceedings, Vol. 15, Proceeding No. 8/17, Oct. 1795, pp. 61-66.
9. Ashmore—*Narrative of a Three Months' March...*, pp. 188-89.
10. Swami Namasivaya, *Guide to Benares.*
11. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 222; H.R. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, p. 256.
12. *Kashi Khandam*, 52/67.
13. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 392.
14. *Kashi Khandam*, 77/51 and 64 /18.
15. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 11.
16. *Kashi Khandam*, 2 /104-05, 5 /105.
17. *Ibid.*, 45 / 35 - 43 .
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19. *Ibid.*, 97 /109-10 .
20. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 350; *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 5.
21. Statement of Choukies—Home Public, March-April 1788.
22. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 350.
23. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, p. 258.
24. See *Kashi Chitra* in the *Kashi Khandam*, published by the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Varanasi; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix, p. 3, Kala Durga.
25. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, pp.120-21; Banarasi Lal Pandey, *Kashi ke Aitihasik Muhalle*, pp. 25- 26.
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27. Judicial (Criminal) Proceeding No. 6 / 26 Feb. 1796, Vol. 28, pp. 354 -80.

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28. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 121.
29. *Kashi Khandam*, 97/14.
30. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 350; *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 5, Letter No. 1130.
31. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 251.
32. Pandey, *Kashi ke Aitihasik Muhalle*, pp. 28 - 29.
33. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix—page 3.
34. *Kashi Khandam*, 69 / 60.
35. *Ibid.*, 71 / 98; see *Kashi Chitra.*
36. *Kashi Khandam*, 49 / 26 - 27.
37. *Ibid.*, 24 / 35 - 38.
38. *Ibid.*, 69 / 136 - 38, 141.
39. See Kashi Chitra, pp. 337-39; *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 5, Letter No. 649.
40. *Kashi Khandam*, 73 / 32; see *Kashi Chitra.*
41. Also called Durbaseshwara, *Kashi Khandam*, 73 / 74- 78.
42. *Ibid.*, 73 / 32 .
43. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, p. 253.
44. *Kashi Khandam*, 72 / 7.
45. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 290.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 337-39; *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 5, Letter No. 649.
47. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix—p. 4.
48. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, pp. 204-06.
49. See *Kashi Chitra.*
50. *Kashi Khandam*, 83 / 65-66.
51. See *Kashi Chitra.*
52. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 317.
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54. List of temples in Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix—p.4; Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages.*
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56. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 224.
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61. This was communicated to the author by Rai Krishna Das.
62. *Kashi Khandam*, 72 /1, 3.
63. *Ibid.*, 10 / 93. This tank, shown in the Benares Guide Map (4 inches) of 1928-30, 3rd Edition, *Survey of India*, has since been filled-in.
64. *Kashi Khandam*, C. 54 .
65. James Prinsep, *Benares*, illustrated in a series of drawings.
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69. *Ibid.*, p. 190 .
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72. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 35.
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86. Pandey, *Kashi ke Aitihasik Muhalle*, p. 30.
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CHAPTER III

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

EARLY TRAVEL HAZARDS

The network of transport and communication is an important aspect of any city, having a major role in its growth and development. Varanasi's intercommunication with the outside world was not very satisfactory till the introduction of railways around the middle of the nineteenth century. Prior to the advent of railroads visitors reached the City by land and river-routes that demanded much time, energy and money. Risk of life was also sometimes involved in travelling. Yet, in spite of many hazards, people would stream into Varanasi by the hundreds and thousands in response to its tremendous religious appeal. While pilgrims followed both land and river-routes, merchants preferred river-routes as they were more convenient and less expensive.

LAND-ROUTES TO VARANASI

Though the Grand Trunk Road from Bengal to Lahore via Varanasi had been in existence from the time of Sher Shah, the Afghan Emperor of India (1539-1545), it was practically unusable because of the lack of regular maintenance. Rani Bhavani, a lady *zamindar* of Bengal renowned for her munificence, constructed a road from Bengal to Varanasi around the third quarter of the eighteenth century.[1] Later on, a well-marked, well-designed and well-protected land-route between the capital of British India at Calcutta and the eastern and northern parts of its Indian Empire, including Varanasi, the site of a big cantonment, became an exigency. Accordingly, a new road, known as Benaras Road, was constructed from Salkia in Howrah, situated opposite Calcutta on the western bank of the Ganga, to Varanasi via Patna around 1795, mainly for postal and military purposes.[2] The Grand Trunk Road from Calcutta to Varanasi was also repaired by Rani Ahalya Bai,[3] possibly towards the last part of the eighteenth century. It should be mentioned here that all these roads overlapped at various points.

In the 1800s there were four principal land-routes from Mirzapur, Jaunpur,

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Ghazipur and Chunar via Ramnagar to Varanasi, but these were unmetalled and poorly maintained.[4]

DAWK JOURNEY

Mail was carried by 'Palankeen Dawk' (post) by bearers from Calcutta to Varanasi along the new road mentioned above.[5] It is interesting to note here the following charges levied for sending letters from Calcutta to Varanasi in 1795 :

	Weight	Rate
Letters weighing	up to 2gms	Annas 7
,, ,,	2 to 3gms	,, 14
,, ,,	3 to 4gms	Re. 1 Annas 5
,, ,,	4 to 5gms	Re. 1 Annas 12[6]

An arrangement was made so that anyone desirous of going to Patna or Varanasi from Calcutta might make use of this Palankeen *Dawk*. It would cost as much as Rs. 400 to Rs. 450 to go from Calcutta to Patna and Rs. 707 to Rs. 764 from Calcutta to Varanasi.[7]

Such a journey by dawk along the new road was thus a very costly affair that could be taken only by the rich.[8] Presumably, the huge cost of the dawk was partially met by income from such passengers and this may have been one of the purposes for which it was intended.

Obviously, this new road was also used by a good number of pilgrims, merchants and Government people.[9] But soon two difficulties stood as genuine barriers to a quick and easy journey; first, there were no resting places at regular intervals along this long route and, secondly, there were few facilities for crossing rivers. These difficulties were removed around 1820 when a network of thirty-two rest stops with kitchens was established along the route at regular intervals—the first one situated at Salkia on the opposite bank of the Ganga of Calcutta and the last situated at Secrole, a suburb of Varanasi.[10] Ropeway bridges were also constructed over five rivers along the way. The rope bridge over the Karmanasha River was later replaced by a stone bridge which was opened in July of 1831.[11] The cost of this bridge was borne by Raja Patni Mall, a *rais* of Varanasi.

These two steps were of immense help both to the Government and the military and to civilians, including merchants and pilgrims, and use of this road increased to a great extent, especially in comparison with river routes. Thus, this route played a singular role in the religious and economic history

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of Varanasi until the introduction of the railway, as it linked India's cultural capital, Varanasi, with its political capital, Calcutta.

ACCOUNTS OF THE DAWK JOURNEY

Here we give a partial picture of the dawk journey from Calcutta to Varanasi undertaken by Bishop Heber in 1824. Heber records:

> 'I had twelve bearers, the road between this place and Seidpoor lying through fields and broken country, a double number being, as I was assured, necessary, particularly as it was not certain that I should find a relief on this side of Benares, a distance of 24 English miles. I had my clothes and writing desk in two *petarrahs* which one man carried slung on a bamboo across his shoulders, my mate-bearer to run with me, and besides light refreshments, I was told to take my pistols which is the usual style in which *Dak* journeys are made in India; and it may serve as an additional proof of the redundant population and cheapness of labour, that this number of bearers are obtained for such severe and unpleasant work, at least 123 for the stage, varying from six to ten miles.'[12]

The following is a description of one of the *sarais* (a roadside resting-place) left by Malachowski, a Polish traveller who visited Varanasi in 1831 in which he writes:

> 'A splendid caravan sarai named monkey-sarai (Hanuman sarai?) is situated midway on the road between Benares and Chatwa. It was presented by a wealthy Indian. It is a single storey stone-built structure, six spacious rooms separated by porticos, in which low beds have been made for travellers. Wide flower lawns in the courtyard are giving fragrant smell and in the middle there is a water reservoir filled with clear water and decorated with a fountain which gives cool drink to the thirsty. A well-shaped temple stands on the right hand side of the garden, which has been made attractive with bas-relief and similarity, the whole hospitable establishment has been made charming with well maintained order. The supervisor of the building is obliged to accept every traveller without payment and without making any distinction for status and faith.'[13]

HORSE DAWK

In April 1850, the first horse dawk was established by one Tanti Mull and afterwards by Messers Gremway & Co. to run from Calcutta to Kanpur, which presumably ran through Varanasi.[14] This mode of travel must have saved both time and money.

The repairs to the Grand Trunk Road, stretching from Calcutta to Lahore, which must have been again unusable at different points, commenced in 1835.[15] It is interesting to note that a bullock train from Calcutta to Varanasi started in October of 1845.[16] On May 1, 1847, it was extended to Ludhiana, on March 1, 1850, to Jullender, and shortly after to Lahore.[17]

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In April 1850, horse-drawn, covered parcel-coach service with accommodation for four passengers each, was started by the Government to run between Varanasi, Meerut, Agra and Delhi. Travelling at a rate of seven miles per hour, passengers were charged one anna per mile each. By this means of transit the distance between Delhi and Varanasi (458 miles) could be covered by a traveller in a comfortable carriage in less than five days for Rs. 28, 10 annas.[18]

A private company called 'England Transit Company' also entered into the business of carrying passengers by horse-dawk from Calcutta to different places including Varanasi.[19] The fees charged were higher than Government rates and this may have been due to some special facilities offered. This charge was Rs. 150 per head for travelling from Calcutta to Varanasi in 1851.[20]

These routes were not always very safe, however, as is evident from Heber's account, despite the vigilance of the authorities.[21]

RIVER-ROUTES

There were different types of boats, such as *palwars*, *bajras*, *pinis*, *mayurpankhis*, *dingis* and *ghoḍdouḍs*, used either for carrying passengers or for short pleasure rides and for carrying cargo to and from Varanasi.[22] The boatmen, including both *manjees* and *dandees*, were usually Hindus and belonged to a particular caste.[23] In addition to these boats, steamers plied the waters of the Ganga between Calcutta and Varanasi carrying both passengers and cargo as early as the middle of the eighteenth century, but details of schedules and such are not known.[24]

TELEGRAPH INTRODUCED

Meanwhile, a telegraph line connected Varanasi with Calcutta at the initiative of W.A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General in Varanasi.[25] Thus, by the end of the first half of the nineteenth century Varanasi became more and more exposed to the outside world.

STREETS WITHIN THE CITY

Thanks to the local administration and the Committee for Local Improvement, new streets were constructed and old ones repaired within the City. Nevertheless, most streets, especially in densely populated areas, were not even wide enough for wheeled carriages and the surfaces lay at lower levels than the entrances of the houses and shops that lined them. Further, the streets zigzagged and were uneven.

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In the southern zone of the City there were two roads, one the Durga Kunda-Kamachha-Bhelupura Road, which served the outer zone, and the other, the Asi-Madanpura-Gadaulia Road, which ran almost parallel to the river Ganga and then continued as far as Rajghat to the north via Thatheri Bazar. The Gadaulia-Luxa Road was non-existent during this period, as the Gadaulia Nala (Godavari Tirth), a waterway, was flowing in that area and there was a bridge over it called Dersi ka pool. The Maidagin crossing was occupied by the Maidagin Talao. The sewers of the City drained into this *talao* (tank), and during the rains the contents were discharged into the Ganga. Before 1850, the Maidagin Talao had become narrow and on land recovered from it, houses were being erected by private individuals.[26] Dalmandi-Kashipura Road existed almost in its present site. The lanes in the inner zone of the City, especially near the rear, were very narrow with numerous turns and ups and downs, though with a steady tendency to slope approaching the Ganga. There were five main entrances to the City in the 1820s; (1) Nadeshwar or Luchhipur Bridge; (2) Beniram Pandit's garden near the Missionary Bungalow, west of Aurangabad; (3) near a well, north of Jagat Ganj; (4) Ausan Ganj, near Thana; and (5) Hanuman Phatak.

BRIDGES AND FERRIES

The Varuna had two bridges at Civil Lines as early as 1789, and at Chauka Ghat in 1856.[27] The Asi was given a bridge in 1827* though the Ganga had none then. There were numerous ferries for crossing the Ganga at different points. In the 1820s the ferries were at Raj Ghat, Gai Ghat, Kali (Lali?) Ghat, Man Mandir Ghat, Shivala Ghat and Ram Ghat. Possibly, one or two more new services were opened later on at Rajmandir Ghat and Shitala Ghat.[28]

In 1856, two beautiful paddleboats were built by a Pollock for Raj Ghat ferry.[29] In the same year, steps were also taken to start building the contemplated steam ferry.[30]

In reply to a proposal to construct a bridge of boats on the Ganga in 1852, the Acting Magistrate of Varanasi observed that it might be effected as the river near the City ran slowly. He doubted, however, whether such a bridge would not be more expensive and therefore, yield less revenue than the present ferries and also whether it would interfere with the navigation of the river so as to be a serious inconvenience to those travelling by water.[31]

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* See Chapter XX.

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Nevertheless, this proposed bridge of boats did come into being by 1865, though during the height of the rains when the Ganga would become very wide, this boat-bridge became inoperative. During this period ferries paddled by men were used instead.[32] When operable, a toll of two rupees was charged each traveller for crossing the boat-bridge, which was definitely high at that time.[33]

A railway was introduced up to Mughalserai, a few miles east of Varanasi, in 1850, and was extended up to the opposite bank of the City's Raj Ghat in 1866.[34] A rail-cum-road bridge was constructed over the Ganga near Raj Ghat during 1880 and 1887.[35]

MODES OF LOCAL TRANSPORT

At first, excepting Civil Station in Secrole, the streets in the outskirts were neither sufficient nor wide enough for the easy movement of traffic. The situation however, improved slowly and the area for movement of traffic within the City was extended, especially after construction of bridges over the Varuna and Asi. But the mode of transport was essentially mediaeval. In addition to *choupalas*, which were generally borne by Hindu bearers,[36] elephants, camels, horses and bullocks pulled different types of wheeled carriages, e.g., gigs, buggies, and tongas. Ekkas pulled by horses and hackeries drawn by bullocks, were also current.[37] Rich people 'being splendidly attired, were carried in gaudy palanquins or in hackeries with gorgeous canopies, drawn by prancing horses with long flowing manes.'[38] The rate for hire of such transport was considerably higher in Varanasi than in other places.[39] It is also interesting to note that bicycles were also used there as early as 1837,[40] and gained rapid popularity.

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2. William Carey, *The Good Old Days of Honourable John Company*, Vol. I, pp.483 and 488-89. Henceforth to be cited as Carey, *The Good Old Days.*
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5. Carey, *The Good Old Days*, Vol. I, pp. 483-89.
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8. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 359; Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay, *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. II, p. 460.
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24. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 269.
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37. *Ibid.*; Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 371.
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CHAPTER IV

POPULATION

INHABITANTS ON THE INCREASE

With the passing away of Aurangzeb in 1707, the downfall of the Mughals and the rise of the Marathas under the Peshwas prompted a rise in the population of Varanasi. Hindus from all over India began flocking to this Holy City, not only for pilgrimage, but to settle as well. The rate of increase accelerated even further when the British took the reins of City administration in 1781. This is corroborated by Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, who, in the capacity of first Judge and Magistrate of Varanasi under the British, reports as early as 1786 that the 'population of the City is increasing' owing to the 'good administration of justice and equity.'[1]

THE FIRST CENSUS OF VARANASI

Now the question arises: What was the actual population of the City, which, of course, fluctuated periodically? There are some figures available here and there, especially those mentioned by European travellers. For example, C. J. C. Davidson, a Lt. Colonel of Engineers who visited the City in 1839, writes that some 'six-hundred-thousand souls' populated the City.[2] Again, the *Sambad Kaumudi,* a Bengali weekly of Calcutta, reported on July 24, 1819, that there were approximately eight lakh (800,000) of people in Varanasi.[3] But these figures are not at all dependable, since they are presumed to have been based on either pure assumption or popular opinion. The first actual census of the City was attempted during the British period in 1801 by Zulfiqar Ali Khan, the *Kotwal* of the City, by order of Deane, the Collector of Varanasi.[4]

When Lord Valentia visited in March 1803, Deane, who was living in 'English Benares' (Secrole), invited this honoured guest to his house.[5] It was then that Deane supplied Valentia with Zulfiqar Ali's census figures. It is evident that the numbers presented in this census were not dependable when one observes that the average number of inhabitants in each one-storey house was calculated at 15, two-storeyed houses at 20 each and six-storeyed houses

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at 150—definitely an exaggerated number. Accordingly, some 582,625 souls would have resided in some 29,935 houses,[6] a far-fetched notion at best.

Defective statistical assumptions produce erroneous data and this did not escape the scrutiny of one serious observer, Bishop Heber, who, though quoting the 1801 census in his account of the City, remarks, 'It was an exaggeration of the really great size of the town and the excessively crowded manner in which the City is built.'[7]

And though Zulfiqar's count was flawed regarding the total number of residents, it appears that his count of residences almost tallied that of James Prinsep's later census and it would appear that Zulfiqar's figures for the number of houses and persons belonging to different professions are more or less reliable.

HAMILTON'S ENUMERATION

Hamilton, in his *Topography of Hindusthan*, recorded estimates on the populations of different cities throughout India, including Varanasi, in 1820. He made these estimates on the basis of a 'variety of documents' and declared them to be an approximation of reality.[8] According to him, the population of Varanasi was 600,000, making it the most populous city in India. In this connection, we are apprised of the populations of twelve other big cities; Calcutta with 500,000 residents, Surat with 450,000, Patna with 312,000, Madras with 300,000, Lucknow with 200,000, Hyderabad with 200,000, Dacca with 180,000, Bombay with 170,000, Delhi with 150,000, Murshidabad with 150,000, Puna with 120,000 and Nagpur with 100,000.

The fact that Hamilton's figures were also exaggerated becomes evident when one takes into account that within a single decade a more statistically accurate census made by James Prinsep put the population of Varanasi within 2 lakh,[9] even though there had been no special reason for any sharp decline in the number of inhabitants since Hamilton's count.

PRINSEP'S DETAILED CENSUS

At the 49th meeting of the Committee for Local Improvement set up by the government in Varanasi in 1823, it was resolved in a meeting on August 7, 1826, upon the motion of James Prinsep, junior member and Secretary of the Committee, that a register should be kept of the residents and houses of each *mahalla*, drawn from drain account documents. Thus, it was held that a census might be taken 'without exciting the least umbrage or suspicion'.[10] Upon the abolition of this Committee by order of the Court of Directors, Prinsep left

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on the records of October 31, 1829, a few memoranda regarding projects which he himself had initiated, along with those which had been undertaken with the sanction and concurrence of the Committee. Among these records he noted the census which he had completed.[11]

Prinsep undertook the census at his personal expense without the aid of public officials[12] and claimed that it was accurate. The census was taken in Hindi by *mohurris* of each mahalla with one copy deposited in the archives of the Office of the General Department, Fort William, where it was left open to examination, so that the figures could be tested, if necessary.

According to this census, which was finalized in 1829, the total population of the City was 181,482 and that of Secrole, consisting of 7,092 Europeans and 4,784 Indians, totalled 11,876.

But Prinsep's efforts were not spared later criticism. Magistrate Gubbins, who himself undertook a census in 1853 for example, complained on the basis of public whispers that Prinsep never consulted the inhabitants of the City about the number of people comprising their families. Again, Babu Rajendra Lal Mitra, a Bengalee aristocrat of the City, was said to have confided to Gubbins that 'when Prinsep had found it difficult to arrive at a correct figure by merely counting the inhabitants, he adopted a very singular and clever method of taking census on the basis of the quantity of salt consumed by the citizens during a twelve month period, making careful calculation of the quantity of salt imported and also of the quantity that was likely to be taken by an individual, and based his calculations thereon.'[13]

Despite such criticisms, one should consider that the taking of census is itself a difficult venture, especially when attempted in an old, unplanned and densely populated city like Varanasi. Accuracy depends upon a sound infrastructure, trained enumerators, co-operation of the people, etc. Even if these factors are favourable, no one can guarantee that a given census is one hundred per cent accurate.

Nonetheless, Prinsep showed rare wisdom, as well as far-sightedness, in undertaking this venture. His census might have suffered from certain discrepancies, but his honesty should not be doubted nor his achievement underestimated. Prinsep had to steer this project almost singlehandedly, assisted by untrained hands. Most remarkably, he financed the whole project himself. In fact, Prinsep's census is a pioneering work in the history of Indian demography and bears his love and concern for the city of Varanasi.

OTHER TABULATIONS

On the basis of data collected from officers of police-*darogahs*, Magistrate

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A. P. Currie recorded in 1837 that the population of the City was 152,393, with Secrole at 20,704 and Ramnagar at 11,070.[14] G. I. Christian, a compiler of official documents, gives an account of two consecutive censuses taken in 1852 in his *Report on the Census of the North Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency*.[15] According to H. C. Tucker, the officiating Commissioner of the Division, the first of these was taken on the night of December 31, 1852, with two officials, named Gubbins and Pollock, taking great pains to arrive at the figures.[16] Though Tucker believed the data enumerating the population at 185,984 was a close approximation of fact, Gubbins, one of the actual operators, on later examination found it to be 'so false' that he had to quash it and gave the *Thanadars* time till March 1, 1853, to prepare the papers again.

During this fresh count, Gubbins was assisted by Pollock as before, and by a new hand, Ellis, in testing and collecting the returns. While executing this census, Gubbins did not depend much on his subordinates, for he suspected they might 'trick' him. He claimed that 'not a half of the pains' had been taken under Prinsep as was taken in this new census. He (Prinsep) only took into account the fixed population of the City and those who had gone away for a few months, while short-term visitors had been omitted. According to Gubbins's new census, the total population of the City was 171,668 and that of Secrole was 9,662.[17]

If we sum up the results of these different enumerations, the population of the City including Secrole was 181,482 in 1829 according to Prinsep; 173,097 in 1837 according to Currie; 185,984 in 1852 according to Tucker; and finally, 181,330 in 1853 according to Gubbins. Thus the figures varied roughly from 173,000 to 186,000 during the more than two decades from 1829 to 1853. On the strength of these data, we may conclude that during the first half of the nineteenth century the population of the City was never less than 173,000 nor higher than 185,000. This contradicts and refutes the popular belief, also shared by many contemporary Indians and Europeans, that Varanasi had a population of some 600,000 souls, if not more.

We must also note that among all these censuses, those taken by Zulfiqar and Prinsep, throw significant light on not only on the number of people and their castes and occupations, but also on various dimensions of the social, cultural, economic and religious aspects of the City.

THE PILGRIMS

If it was difficult to ascertain the number of permanent residents of the

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City, it would have been infinitely more difficult to arrive at a correct number of pilgrims and temporary settlers. These were the floating multitudes, the pilgrims, merchants and other visitors, using different routes to reach the City for different purposes. People rarely arrived by *dawk* (a horse-carriage used for postal services), on horse or elephant or by palanquin. Generally, people formed large groups and travelled together either by boat or on foot. To take one example, pilgrims, particularly from Bengal, Maharashtra and South India, would visit the City in large groups consisting of hundreds of people.[18] From various references to visits by pilgrims from different quarters and also from the number of resident Brahmin priests attending the pilgrims, we may form an idea of the number of pilgrims. Records show that some 11,311 Maharashtrian Brahmins attended to pilgrims from Maharashtra while 3,000 Bengalee Brahmins attended to pilgrims from Bengal.[19] The significant fact to be noted in this connection is that the number of Maharashtrian pilgrims far surpassed all counterparts, followed by Bengalee pilgrims whose numbers gradually rose during the same period. As far as the total number of pilgrims is concerned, Valentia wrote in the early nineteenth century that the average number of pilgrims might be taken at ten thousand, but that at the time of certain Hindu festivals, the number of visitors defied all calculations.[20]

Nevertheless, Prinsep made a sincere attempt to count the actual number of pilgrims visiting the City on the occasion of an eclipse in May 1826 with the help of his *chaprasis* stationed at both land and river approaches to the City. Prinsep determined that the number of new arrivals on that occasion was around 55,000, but commented that the eclipse on this occasion was a rather partial one and that it was not unreasonable to conclude that the number of visitors during a total eclipse or some such occasion could surpass 100,000.[21]

The condition of principal land routes to Varanasi from Mirzapur, Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Chunar via Ramnagar and the Grand Trunk Road from Bengal to Varanasi was not good at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[22] Communications had begun to improve with the construction of a new road from Calcutta to Varanasi in 1795 and, later, repairs to the principal land routes. When railways up to Mughalsarai were introduced in 1850 and extended to the opposite bank of Raj Ghat in 1866[23], there was a sharp rise in the number of pilgrims. People, especially elderly women, who could not put up with the hardships of the long, arduous and at times, insecure route availed themselves of the improved systems of transport and communications and started pouring into the City.

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FOREIGN POPULATIONS

There were also numbers of foreigners living in the City. The Nepali population consisted of pilgrims, students and monks, both Hindu and Buddhist,[24] and there were a few Tibetan and Burmese Buddhist residents.[25] Central Asian peoples such as Persians, Turks and Tartars were also reported to have lived in the City, but as they resembled local Muslims, identification was not easy.[26] Europeans were there, of course, though entry into the Upper Provinces including Varanasi was restricted, excepting those who were in the service of the Government, and they had to seek permission from the appropriate authority for either visiting or settling.[27]

We find the names of ten Europeans who lived in the City as early as in 1788 in a list sent by Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident, to the Secretary to the Government;[28] these Europeans were not in the Government's service, but stayed on in the City with different missions. We get the names of five more Europeans from a list by Ali Ibrahim Khan, the Magistrate of the City, during this time,[29] but Duncan declared that all of them were 'natives of India'.[30] According to Duncan, four among these Europeans were decidedly Portuguese; Monsieur La Blance was French; Benjamin D. Aguilar was an Austrian and was believed to be a Jew; Jacob was a Russian; and the remaining names of James Augustus Grant, Thomas Scott Gurdinar, Davies, Henry Brown and Robinson were most probably British. There was also another Russian by the name of Peter Federoff living in the City in the early part of nineteenth century.*

Besides these, there must have been many Europeans who served the Company (Government) in different capacities, especially as military personnel, and lived in and around the outskirts of the City. From the list of subscribers for the construction of a chapel at Secrole in 1815, it may be assumed that of the 59 European donors, at least 18 served in the military with the rest employed in other capacities.[31]

Reverend William Tennant, who visited the City in the last decade of the eighteenth century, wrote that the number of Europeans in the City was very small. The Judge, the Registrar, the Collector, and a few civil servants comprised the whole of the Government's establishment. In addition to these, a few private merchants and planters made up the whole local European society.[32] Curiously enough, though Lord Valentia gave a detailed enumeration on the native inhabitants of the City, he was totally silent about the number

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* For details regarding Federoff, see Chapter XII : Demetrius Galanos.

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of European residents. Hamilton estimated the number of foreigners at three thousand in the 1810s.[33] Though Heber writes that no Europeans lived in the town,[34] there were exceptions like the missionaries who were either connected with teaching in the Jaynarayan School and/or undertook preaching or were engaged in some other missionary services. Again, Heber himself recorded that among other Europeans there was one Greek and one Russian who lived among the natives in town.[35] According to Prinsep, there were 7,092 Europeans living in the City in 1829. This number must have included the Europeans who were in the military service of the Government and lived in the Cantonment.

It appears a little confusing, especially in the background of Prinsep's enumeration of Europeans at 7,092 and Hindus at 4,784 in the Secrole and Cantonment areas in 1829, when G. I. Christian fixes the total non-Hindu population of those areas, comprising both Europeans and Muslims, at only 2,776 and Hindus at 6,888 in 1854.[36] If both of these counts are taken as correct, the rise of the Hindu population from 4,784 in 1826 to 6,888 in 1853 may be explained as natural growth, but it is hard to explain why the European population fell from 7,092 to less than 2,776 in later years. One possible explanation would be if British forces stationed at the Cantonment were greatly reduced at that particular time. One American Sanskrit Scholar named Fitzedward Hall, also lived in Varanasi during 1850 and 1855.

THE PROVINCIALS

People from different provinces of India lived in the City but no census till 1857, excepting that of Prinsep, threw any light on the provinces represented in the population. A rough idea may, of course, be formed about this from other sources. During the Mughal rule, the Rajputs, and after the downfall of the Mughals, the Marathas poured into the City in greater numbers than people from other provinces. In Zulfiqar Ali's enumeration, local Rajputs comprised the greatest number and were divided into three categories: Firstly, army personnel numbering 2,000; secondly, dealers of grain numbering 1,880; and finally, labourers of all descriptions numbering 1,200.[37] This influx of Rajputs into the City was corroborated by Prinsep who calculated the number of Rajput Vaishyas alone at 6,002[38] and there must have been more Rajputs belonging to other castes as well.

The number of the Maharashtrians in the City during this period swelled considerably with the arrival of Amrita Rao (Peshwa) and 4000 followers in 1803[39], and later with that of two Maratha *Sardars*, Pandu Rang Rao and

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Hari Rao Pursuram, with 12,000 and 6,000 followers respectively. According to W. A. Brooke, the Governor-General's Agent at the City, the number of permanent Maharashtrian residents in the City was 8,000 in 1807.[40] Thus, the total number of Maharashtrians rose to 30,000 at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Again, a large number of Maratha troops had come in 1807, though only for a short stay.[41] According to Heber, who visited in the 1820s, there were about 20,000 Maharashtrians in the City, which suggests that many who had come to the City with their chiefs did not stay here long.[42] Among the Maharashtrians who lived in the City, about fifty per cent were Brahmins and Prinsep placed their number at 11,311.[43] Almost three decades after the visit of Heber, a Bengalee traveller, in 1857, found many Maharashtrians, including ten thousand infantry, residing in the south of the Asi Ghat.[44]

Two consolidated lists of Bengalees living in the City in the last quarter of the eighteenth century have since become available from Government records. A group of these people pleaded the innocence of Warren Hastings and provided certified documents in his behalf during his impeachment at the British Parliament, while others greeted him upon his acquittal from charges.[45] Jayanarayan Ghoshal, an illustrious Bengalee aristocrat of the City, observed in his *Kashi Parikrama*, written in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, that there were many Bengalee Brahmins as well as Vaishnavas in Kashi, but we do not get any specific numbers.[46] In the editorial of the first issue of the *Kashivartaprakashika*, a Bengali fortnightly published since June 1, 1851, it is claimed that there were more than 3,000 Bengalees in the City.[47] Bholanauth Chunder, in his travel account of Varanasi written in 1860, estimated the Bengalee population roughly at 10,000, which appears to be inflated.[48] Still, it is true that the Bengalee population in the City tended to increase during these years.[49]

There was also a large number of Gujaratis who played important roles in the life of the City. Among the Noupatty bankers and merchants who sent a letter, written in Hindi but Gujarati in character, in favour of Warren Hastings during his impeachment, there were many Gujaratis.[50] Again, among others, including the Sanskrit scholars who certified Hastings, there were also Gujarati pandits.[51] In the list of persons arrested for 'conspiracy against the public peace' in July - August 1852, there were many Gujaratis.[52] According to Prinsep's census, there were 231 Gujarati Brahmins living in the City during 1829-30.[53]

Like Bengali Tola, there were also places like Lahori Tola, Oudh Gaivi

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and Oudh Sharki which indicate that people from Lahore and Oudh also migrated to the City and generally lived in particular localities.

Thus not only from Rajputana, Maharashtra, Bengal and Gujarat but also from almost all corners of India; Madras, Mysore, Haryana, the Himalayan region, Kamrup, Kashmir, Khandesh, Baghelkhand, Bihar, as well as districts neighbouring Varanasi, people, especially Brahmins, came to the City.[54]

From the data given above, it is evident that at least during the first half of the eighteenth century, Rajputs and Maharashtrians formed the largest groups among all Indians migrating to the City from provinces other than Uttar Pradesh.

DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES : SOCIAL DIVISIONS AND PROFESSIONS

Zulfiqar's census of 1801 does not list the number of the Hindu and Muslim residents of the City separately. According to Prinsep's census, excluding children and other uncounted persons numbering an estimated 26,387, there were 122,365 Hindus and 31,248 Muslims.[55]

HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

Hindus, as we know, are divided into many castes and sub-castes. This becomes especially evident in a place like Varanasi where Hindus of all descriptions came to live. Hence, a study of the castes in Varanasi is important for two reasons; first, it provides an important source of detailed information on the demography of the City, and secondly, it throws light on the caste system of the Hindus. M. A. Sherring, a missionary of the London Missionary Society (LMS) who first attempted a historical study of Varanasi, made an extensive survey of the castes and tribes of Varanasi, the result of which was published in a voluminous work entitled *Hindu Tribes and Castes*. But even earlier than the Sherring study, Jayanarayan Ghoshal's account of Varanasi in Bengali and the censuses taken by Zulfiqar Ali and Prinsep give us an idea of castes extant in the City.

Jayanarayan, however, only provides details regarding Brahmins. According to him, the Brahmins of Varanasi were divided into the following groups: (1) Maharashtra; (2) Draviḍ; (3) Nagar Gujarati; (4) Karnat; (5) Tailang; (6) Kanyakubja; (7) Saraswati; (8) Maithili; (9) Utkal; (10) Chharoria, a branch of Kanaujia; (11) Sonaria, another branch of Kanaujia; (12) Bengalee, (13) Malwi; (14) Hiranya, migrating from Haryana; (15) Gauḍ; (16) Dayma, the Daymia branch of Gauḍ; (17) Gujjar, another branch of Gauḍ; (18) Chilaoḍ, coming from Kedar-Badri; (19) Chhekoad

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from Rajputana; (20) Parikh, also of Gauḍ; (21) Deshwal, another Gauḍ; (22) Kamrupi; (23) Kashmiri; (24) Baghela, coming from Baghelkhand; (25) Khandeshi; (26) Maula, from Poona; (27) Ott; (28) Deshastha, a branch of Maharashtrian Brahmins; (29) Gurjar; and (30) Huseini Brahmins.[56]

While Zulfiqar Ali's census records different professions and not exactly castes, one can form an idea of castes from his references. Prinsep's census, on the other hand, is more elaborate, accurate and specific in this regard and we learn that Shudras numerically dominated the City, followed by Brahmins, Kshetris and Vaishyas respectively.

Zulfiqar Ali also records about 75 professions, while Prinsep identifies more than 105. From these censuses, we also learn the common and respective occupations of Hindus and Muslims. Choice of profession was largely guided by both tradition and local circumstances. For example, here a butcher would never be a Hindu since both the killing of animals and the eating of meat are prohibited in a religious City like Varanasi, so the butchers of the City were only Muslims. The majority of weavers were also Muslim, while there were a few Hindus in this profession. Among the Hindus there were many pandits, writers, merchants, cowherds, gardeners, distillers, bearers and others numbering around 5,000. Important Hindu occupations (which also indicate corresponding castes) were *dhobi*, *darji, teli, mallah, tamoli, halwai, sonar, barui, tanti, nau, mochi, lonia* and *lohar*.

If we make a comparative study of Zulfiqar Ali and Prinsep's data, we encounter certain discrepancies. For example, according to Zulfiqar, barbers and grooms were both Hindus and Muslims; but according to Prinsep, only Hindus were barbers and only Muslims were grooms. Again, there is mention of fishermen and tobacconists by Zulfiqar, while there is no such mention by Prinsep. This is perhaps an omission on Prinsep's part.

Prinsep placed Bengalee *kayasthas* and *vaidyas* in the list of the Shudras, but Bengalees themselves regarded vaidyas and kayasthas as ranking behind Brahmins, but higher than Vaishyas and Shudras in the social hierarchy. Prinsep's divisions and sub-divisions of castes of the Hindus were not always exhaustive. In his census, Bengalee Brahmins formed a single denomination, though in reality there were many sub-divisions among Bengalee Brahmins.

Prinsep also states that there were one thousand Muslims of higher social strata, who had independent sources of livelihood but failed to elaborate on what these were.

In spite of these limitations, Prinsep deserves credit for furnishing the

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first detailed information on social and economic divisions and their corresponding professions in Varanasi.

OTHER COMMUNITIES

Although Zulfiqar and Prinsep provided detailed information about the divisions of the Hindus and Muslims of the City, information about other religious communities is lacking. What scanty information is available about religions other than Hinduism and Islam is given below. The Jaina community was not very large and those who lived here tended to be well-to-do merchants that had migrated from Bundelkhand and belonged to either the *Shvetambara* or *Digambara* sects.[57]

There were a few Sikhs living in the City during this period. Sardar Lehna Singh Majhetia, a distinguished Sikh Sardar, being disgusted with British policies in the Punjab, decided to pass his last days in Varanasi, the place being sanctified by its association with Guru Nanak and a few other Sikh gurus. The Sardar left Punjab on the pretence of pilgrimage in March 1844,[58] went to Hardwar, and finally, came to settle in the City constructing a bungalow on the west bank of Ramkund (present day Srinagar Colony). Later, his son, Surat Singh, a Sikh general, followed suit and this formed the nucleus of the Sikh settlement here.

The Christian population consisted mainly of Europeans, including civilians, ecclesiastics, military and civil personnel and also some Indian converts. The number of European Christians fluctuated from time to time for obvious reasons and about 600 Indian Christians were attached to the different church missions of the City in the 1860s.[59] Buddhists were virtually non-existent in Varanasi, as only a few Buddhists from neighbouring countries would sometimes visit and stay here.

DIGNITARIES AND THEIR DEPENDANTS

There was also a distinct class of dignitaries dwelling in Varanasi, this class lived with huge numbers of dependants. Besides those living here of their own accord for religious purposes, there were others forced by the Government to live here as detainees. Julfiqar submitted the following list of such dignitaries with their respective attendants :

The family and dependants of the Mughal Prince Mirza Shegoofta Bukt	300
The dependants of Jahanabadee Begum of the Mughal Imperial Family	125

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The dependants of the son of the late Nawab Dil Dileer Khan	100
The dependants of the Raja of Nepal	1,000
The dependants of Raja Uditnarain of Varanasi	400
The dependants of the wife of Gulam Muhammad Khan, the Ruhela Chief	150
Total =	2,075

In addition to these dignitaries and dependants, Nawab Wazir Ali Shah, who was compelled to vacate the throne of Oudh in favour of Saadat Ali Khan, proceeded to the City in 1798 with a large retinue.[60] Amrita Rao Peshwa of Maharashtra, the adopted son of Raghunath Rao who had to forsake the throne in favour of Baji Rao, also came to the City with a large number of dependants in 1803. Wazir Ali stayed here only for a short period and left the City in 1799, but Amrita Rao lived here till he passed away in 1824.[61]

COSMOPOLITAN POPULATION

The above demographic picture of the City shows heterogenous elements in the population of Varanasi, which gave it a cosmopolitan character. Thus, though it had maintained its national character from the point of population, it has also assumed a more continental, nay, international character from the last quarter of the eighteenth century when in addition to provincial Indians, people from different countries, especially Europe, lived here as well.

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APPENDIX - A

THE JULFIQAR ALI KHAN CENSUS : EXTRACTS

Profession or Occupation	Members
Occupations in which the Hindus were exclusively engaged :	
Brahmins taking alms and living on charity	7,000
Manjees and *dandies* (boatmen)	307
Merchants/shopkeepers, tradesmen, dealers, mechanics, persons engaged in handicrafts, labourers, bankers, shroffs and money changers	820
Jewellers	150
Gosains, the Hindu Sannyasi merchants	500
Wholesale dealers in cloth	768
Weavers of *gauze* and *kincaub*, lacemen and silkmen, chiefly Rajputs	580
Vendors of drugs and spices	360
Brokers/criers, dealers in cloth by retail hawkers	1,055
Dealers in grain, chiefly Rajputs	880
Confectioners	500
Tailees (oil manufacturers)	300
Vendors of oil (retail)	50
Sellers of *paan* or *tumollees* (betel-leaves)	800
Makers of silk twists	256
Labourers of all descriptions, chiefly Rajputs	1,200
Sellers of paper and almanacs	32
Occupations in which Hindus were engaged side by side with Muslims :	
Armed peons (chiefly Rajputs & Brajbasis)	2,000
Gomastas in the service of merchants and traders	1,500
Khidmudgars/chobdars, elephant, camel and hackney drivers, horse-breakers, grooms, sellers of grass, *mussalchees*	2,500
Physicians	110
Masons/stone-cutters, carpenters and porters	2,153
Barbers	385
Dyers/turners, makers of *satak* (the elastic pipe fitted to a hubble-bubble)	157
Tobacconists	600
Tailors and *ruffogheers*	358
Makers of silver and tin plates	38
Makers of bracelets	73
Brick makers/lime-burners, potters (*Koomars*)	835
Butchers/poulterers, fowlers and fishermen	284

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Although Zulfiqar Ali has not referred to religion regarding the following occupations, one can assume that these ranks also included both Hindus and Muslims :

Washermen	518
Minstrels, dancing women, mountebanks, prostitutes	280
Silversmiths and goldsmiths	564
Vendors of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs	86
Sellers of embroidered leather and cloth, shoes and slippers	150
Domes, *chumars*, sweepers	616

Like the Hindus, Muslims also had distinct occupations including timbrel players, sweepers of places of worship, sellers of small wares and toys, bakers and food-sellers, weavers and carpet makers and sellers of fireworks.

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APPENDIX - B

THE PRINSEP CENSUS

Prinsep made the traditional division of Hindus into four castes, Brahmanas, Kshatriyas/Kshetris, Vaishyas and Shudras. His statistics included their numbers and occupations (or professions), as well as statistics on Hindu sannyasis and Muslims as follows :

Caste	Number	Profession or Occupation/Remarks
BRAHMANAS		
Panch Dravid		
*Maharashtra		All of the following were pandits, recluses or *Kashibasi* and a few are merchants.
Dravid	300	
Tylang	500	
Chitpaun (Chitpavan)	3,300	
Yajurbedi	5,000	
Raghurbedi	755	
Sanwai	25	
Kanno	471	
Prabhu	20	
Kanhare	400	
Karhare	475	
Abhir	65	
	11,311	
*Nagar		
Bishan Nagari	250	Capitalists, lending money and jewels on interest.
Barnagari	500	ditto
Ahmedabadi	315	ditto
Sathodara	20	ditto
Sipahi	70	Servants.
Prishnora	51	Not recorded.
Chitrora	25	ditto
	1,231	
*Mor		All of the following were fire worshippers, recluses, performed the duty of puja daily at temples, or lived on stipends from individuals. Some were pandits, others lived on *khayrati* (charity).

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Bhar Bedi	71	
Chaturvedi	175	
Agyarakshana	17	
Dhinouja	61	
Chaturvedi Dhinouja	33	
Talujina	13	
Raychandrjina	17	
Pathi Chaturvedi	27	
Puchhana	37	
Gulakhna	100	
Lorha Bhantana	16	
	567	
*Udich,		Occupations for the following not recorded.
Sabsr	700	
Tolakia	125	
Bagria	80	
Kham Bhacti	72	
Anter bedi	100	
Mathabi	23	
Surati	23	
Modaru Surati	23	
	1,146	
*Mewara		All the following lived on *khayrati* performed *noukari* (service) or were employed as *gomasta* (merchantile agents).
Bhat	175	
Marosi	7	
Tiwari	7	
Dungurpura Bhat	80	
Sarvari	63	
Maluvi Brahmana	75	
Barodara	23	
	430	
*Kherewal		
Kherewal	1,000	The greater part were merchants, though some lived on charity, etc.
Kharanja	100	Not recorded.
Balmik	11	ditto

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Pushjarnia	90	Not recorded.
Disawal	55	ditto
Sri Mali	250	ditto
Jambu	19	ditto
Narmdeo	16	ditto
Raikwal	19	ditto
Choubisa	27	ditto
Palliwal	83	ditto
	1,670	
Puchhna Srimali,	77	Not recorded.
Puchhna Bishen nagari	87	ditto
Puchhna Jharila	77	ditto
Nandora	45	ditto
Karsora	27	ditto
Udambwar	21	ditto
Kharachata	27	ditto
Bhargava	70	ditto
Kamloja	81	ditto
Rorwalu	35	ditto
Parbhaskar	37	ditto
Raithelu	45	ditto
Samora	55	ditto
Gugalu	18	ditto
Motalu	57	ditto
Tapodhan Bharai	12	ditto
Nardik	17	ditto
Sanawar Gopali	57	ditto
Medipurna	26	ditto
Likna phutkal	16	ditto
Bhojak	12	*Purohits* and *Pujaris* (priest) of the Jains, including Oswals.
Jharula	70	Not recorded.
Bansi	87	ditto
	1,056	
*Panch Gauḍ		
Kanyakubj Brahmana	1,500	Of various occupations; none very rich.
Sarwaria	4,500	Not recorded.
Sanouria	575	ditto
Jijautia	27	ditto
	6,602	

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*Gauḍ		The following were employed as cooks by Vaishyas and Brahmanas, and some were gomastas.
Sri Gauḍ	20	
Adi Gauḍ	1,500	
Sri Gauḍ Marwari	35	
Gauḍ	150	
Hirania	75	
Kirtnia	36	
Bireshwarwala	39	
Silujana	57	
Girnaria	7	
	1,919	
*Athbansi		
Saraswat	200	Purohits of Kshetris.
Maha Brahmana	250	Inherit the effects of all Hindus and Jaina Oswals(?).
Ganga putra	1,000	Attend bathers, etc.
Bengali Brahmana	3,000	Kashibasi.
Shakal Dwipi	300	Various professions.
Panchnadea	200	Ghat-waiters.
Kashmiri	200	Writers.
Chhenath	900	Reside in Rajmandil, chiefly as servants.
Soni	11	Goldsmiths.
Parbati	125	Various professions.
Mathuria Choube	26	Khayrati.
Khandua	31	Not recorded.
	6,243	
KSHETRIS		
Rajput	6,160	Service, wire-drawers, etc.
Bhuihar	5,000	Called themselves 'Brahman-cultivators'.
Oswal	294	Not recorded.
Khatri, Lahori	1,400	These and the following were brokers, cloth merchants and servants.
Purabi	648	
Bavanjai	400	
Panchjoti	200	
Barehjati	150	
Sisoudia Rajput	40	
	14,292	

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VAISHYAS

Agarwala	2,000	Merchants and Tradesmen.
Kasrwani	2,100	ditto
Maheshwari	150	ditto
Bisanagar Bania	160	Gomastas.
Dasanagar Bania	100	ditto
Disavai Dasa Bania	750	ditto
Disaval Bisa Bania	80	ditto
Mor Dasa Bania	183	ditto
Lanr Dasa Bania	75	ditto
Patel Gujarati	125	ditto
Srimali Soni	200	Goldsmiths.
Bhatia	214	Brokers for Goldsmiths.
Parval	50	ditto
Rora	700	Shopkeepers.
Aumar	155	ditto
Kasaundhan	90	*Atar* distillers.
Bengali	200	Not recorded.
Jharula	76	ditto
Sunri	16	ditto
Bandrwar	14	ditto
Rastokl	40	ditto
Bhatt	800	Khayrati.
Gujarati Bhatt	22	ditto
	8,300	

SHUDRAS

Bengali, Vaidya	200	Physicians.
Kaeth		
Shribastab	5,000	Writers.
Ashthana	250	ditto
Gouḍ	72	ditto
Saksena	40	ditto
Bhat–Naga	55	ditto
Mathar	13	ditto
Bengali	1,500	ditto
Sathia	150	Surgeons and Occultists.
Darzi Sribastab	900	Tailors.
Dhobi	800	Washermen.
Ahir	5,250	Cowherds.
Jat	54	Not recorded.
Kasera	1,300	Braziers.

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Koeri	8,351	Gardeners-farmers.
Koeri, Allahabadi	100	Not recorded.
Kahar	5,000	Bearers.
Kunbi	600	Servants.
Mallah	1,500	Boatmen.
Kalwar	6,600	Distillers.
Teli	2,500	Oilmen.
Teli (Delhiwala)	1,200	Ditto
Teli (Bengali)	100	Ditto
Tamoli	1,200	Sellers of betels
Halwai	1,500	Confectioners.
Khatik	400	Fruiterers.
Sonar, Purabia	1,100	Goldsmiths.
Tara Gaur, Soni,	30	ditto
Mera Soni, Jaypuri	50	ditto
Karia Sonar	60	ditto
Lohar Kanouji	1,800	Smiths.
Purabia	100	ditto
Barbi	900	Carpenters.
Kharadi	194	Turners.
Lahera	300	Workers in lac.
Lahera Churiwala	60	Lac-bracelet makers.
Patwa	400	Threaders of beads, etc.
Tanti Pitambar baph	260	Silk weavers.
Khatri Gota baph	75	Lac embroiderers.
Sarkiwala	14	Earring makers.
Mochi, Hiratarash, Buneal	500	Shoemakers.
Khandi	95	Diamond cutters.
Nau sribastab	850	Barbers.
Nau pachian	12	ditto
Nau Gujarati	30	ditto
Kasbi Khangi, or Ramjani	1,500	Courtesans.
Kasbi Ghungruband	264	*Nach* girls.
Kathak	118	Music and dancing masters.
Bhuja Kanoujia	556	Sellers of parched grains.
Kandu	1,200	ditto
Gadaria	350	Shepherds.
Bhareria	395	Beggars.
Kumhar	700	Potters.
Kumhar Gadhawala	37	Brick makers.
Lonia	400	Salt makers, builders of mud walls, etc.
Benu bansi	125	Cane workers.
Chhipi	160	Chintz printers.

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Sirkiwala	35	Thatchers.
Bari	415	Link boys(?)
Chumar	1,850	Leather workers.
Kutta chumar	180	Silk dyers.
Thuwai	30	Silk workers.
Laru Marhatta	4	Shoemakers.
Dom	213	Corpse dressers, eaters of dead animals, etc.
Tari wala pasi	96	Toddy sellers.
Mochu Dekhani	50	Curriers.
Dabgar	76	Leather vessel makers.
Kanjar	33	Rope makers.
Dharkar narsinha wale	50	Cane workers.
	60,302	

HINDU FAKIRS

Dandi	700	Lived on charity.
Jatti	22	Jains.
Kanphata	38	Attended to Bhyronath Temple.
Kabirpanthi	40	Had land in Goruckpur.
Nanaksahi	1,000	Sikhs.
Ramanandi	2,500	Followers of Ramananda.
Sannyasi	2,500	Mostly Gosain merchants.
Dravid Sannyasi	50	Monks.
Lingia	105	Took all offerings to Mahadeo (Shiva).
Jangam	16	Went about with cows and bells.
Aghori	200	Naked outcastes.
	7,171	

MUSLIMS

Groups	Number	Occupation
Rais, Sheikh Seid, Moghal, Pathan, etc.	10,000	Independent fortunes.
Julaha	10,000	Weavers (also a Hindu trade).
Ghalla Wala-Trilochani	1,000	Grain merchants of Trilochan.
Mali	62	Gardeners (also a Hindu trade).
Kunjra	325	Green grocers.
Darzi	700	Tailors (also a Hindu trade).
Dhobi, Delhiwala	80	Washermen (ditto).
Dhobi, Benarasi	100	ditto
Kasbi, Khangi	1,212	Courtesans (also a Hindu trade).
Kasbi, Ghungruband	500	Dancing girls (ditto).
Jarrab	225	Surgeons (ditto).

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Dafali	200	Musicians (ditto).
Hijra	50	Eunuchs, took fees on births.
Atashbaz	200	Fireworks makers.
Rangrez	475	Dyers.
Halal Khor	900	Scavengers.
Hakak	112	Gem polishers.
Moharkhand	25	Engravers.
Sikligar	71	Metal polishers.
Kundigar	75	Wire flatteners.
Kalabatunwale	28	Gold- and silver-lace makers.
Lohar	50	Blacksmith (also a Hindu trade).
Kheradi	50	Turners (ditto).
Churiwale	300	Cutlers.
Mochi, Jindaz	105	Saddlers.
Mochi, Jutiwala	212	Shoemakers (also a Hindu trade).
Kasai, Barha	354	Butchers.
Kasai, Chhota	250	ditto
Nan Bai	130	Bakers.
Sabonwale	41	Soap sellers.
Satrinjiwale	63	Makers of *satrinjees.*
Bhatteara	381	Servants in *serais.*
Galichawala	52	Carpet makers.
Bhisti	180	Water carriers.
Intpaz	173	Brick makers (also a Hindu trade).
Nycha band	32	Hookah-snake makers.
Dhunia	100	Cotton spinners.
Madari	20	Snake catchers.
Rafugar	233	Shawl menders.
Tarke chhatawale	18	Umbrella makers.
Chylodar	9	Not recorded.
Niaria	155	Refiners.
Chabuk Sawar	200	Grooms.
Raj	300	Bricklayers.
Kahar	200	Bearers (also a Hindu trade).
Fakirs	500	Holy persons.
Chandal	700	Outcastes (actually lowest caste).
	31,148	

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Abstract of the Hindu castes and sects mentioned above :

Caste	Hindus	Denominations	Number
Brahmanas	Maharashtrian	11	11,311
	Nagar	7	1,231
	Mor	11	567
	Udich	8	1,146
	Mewara	7	430
	Kherewal	11	1,670
	(lesser) Kherewal	9	398
	Paunch Gauḍ	4	6,602
	Gauḍ	9	1,919
	Bengali	1	3,000
	Gangaputra	1	1,000
	Less important sects	27	3,026
Kshetris	Rajput	2	6,200
	Bhuihar	1	5,000
	Khetri	6	3,092
Vaishyas or Bunyas		22	8,300
Shudras		69	60,302
Hindu Fakirs		11	7,171

Summary

Hindu population	1,22,365
Muslim population	31,248
Children, visitors + other omissions	26,387
Total Population, by Mahalla Census	1,80,000

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CHAPTER V

SOCIAL MILIEU

A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

A demographic picture* of the period under review shows that from the time the British occupied the City, people were divided into two main classes, Indians and Europeans. While Indians formed the vast majority, the number of Europeans in the City was negligible. Indians, again, were divided into various communities on the basis of religious faith, namely Hindus, Jainas and Muslims. Hindus, the largest community, were further divided into Rajputs, Maharashtrians, Tamils, Parvatiyas, Gujaratis, Oriyas, Bengalees, etc., on the basis of their place of birth and language; they were again subdivided into Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra castes and further into hundreds of sub-castes. Unlike the Hindus, Jainas and Muslims had only two main divisions each made on the basis of religious custom; *Shvetambara* and *Digambara* for the Jainas and Shiah and Sunni for the Muslims.

Consequently, though the people of the City had lived together for hundreds of years under the same administration,[1] no homogeneous society took shape. Disintegration was more in operation than integration. While it is true that Hindus shared certain common beliefs namely, the eternity and infallibility of the Vedas, image-worship, the holiness of the Ganga, etc., significant differences in the particulars of religious practice and in matters of caste were also evident. Thus, for all practical purposes, local society was pluralistic in character.

Let us first look at these various communities to form an idea about their basic characteristics and the mutual relations among them.

THE HINDUS

Relations among the Hindus may be viewed on five levels: family, caste, religious sect, householders/monks, and finally, province, which includes language.

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* See Chapter III.

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FAMILY STRUCTURE AND RELATIONS

It appears from the study of contemporary sources—mainly histories of the City's old and venerable families[2] as recorded or told by their descendants—that the prevalent structure was the institution of the joint family, which was patriarchal in nature, with the senior-most male member being its head. Relations among family members were quite cordial and unlike their counterparts in Calcutta, people with Western educations rarely challenged traditional values or indulged in confrontation with their families and society at large.

CASTE RELATIONS

The Hindus, as we have seen, were divided into many castes and sub-castes.* Here we shall make a general survey of their mutual relations.

Significantly enough, though the City was the main centre of orthodox Hinduism, in comparison with many other places of India, especially South India, it showed more liberalism in matters of caste relations. Enugulu Veeraswamy, a Telugu pilgrim coming from Madras in the mid-nineteenth century, was struck by the liberalism of the City with regard to caste. He writes :

> 'The Brahmins purchase and eat sweets and cooked food here which do not contain water and salt. They also do not enquire as to the caste of the cooks who cooked these foods.... The Brahmins of the country do not insult other castes nor are they very unkind to them. In Dravida country, Sudras, and specially *Chandalas*, are insulted much : (There) the proximity of *Chandalas* and the sight of the Sudras is prohibited.'[3]

Such comparative catholicity of the City was mainly due to its dynamic and cosmopolitan character, formed by the diversity of peoples from various parts of India.

INTRA-RELIGIOUS SECTS

Though the presiding deities of the City were Shiva and Annapurna, there were also other deities worshipped with great devotion, including Durga, Ganesha, Rama, Krishna, Hanumana, Bhairavas and many other gods and demigods. A universal respect for all had a catholic impact that fostered good mutual relations between the followers of the different Hindu sects.

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* See Chapter III.

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LAY AND MONASTIC RELATIONS

It is evident from literary sources of the seventeenth century that monks were held in high esteem in general and relations between lay and monastic Hindus were of mutual respect and love.[4] This tradition of cordial relations, which had always been one of the chief characteristics of Hindu society, continued to survive during this time and had a positive effect on society as a whole.

RELATIONS ALONG PROVINCIAL AND LINGUISTIC LINES

In spite of this basic unity, major divisions between the Hindus of the City based on linguistic and provincial differences were quite apparent. Most of the Maharashtrians, Bengalees, Tamilians, Telugus, etc., were concentrated in particular areas, as if these had become their displaced natural habitats. This is evident from the names of the *mahallas*, e.g. Bengali Tola, and also from the layout of the City.* Within such homogeneous neighbourhoods there was mutual intercourse, help and cooperation, and this, in a place so far from their native lands and tongues, led to the growth of such communities. There were, of course, exceptions, and people belonging to one province might live in a locality predominantly inhabited by people from another province. It appears that this spirit of help and cooperation was also extended to those entering the neighbourhood from different provinces as well and relations with such minorities were cordial.

We do not know much about any interrelationships between these communities, but from the study of different sources it appears that there was no formal, customary or regular intercourse between them. Rather, they generally maintained their identities as distinct units regarding social matters.

THE MUSLIMS

Rifts that existed between the Muslim Shiah and Sunni sects, and again between weaver and non-weaver Muslims, must have strained social relations between them. James Prinsep observes in his *Benares Illustrated* (p.49) :

> '... more danger is generally apprehended from the collision of the two sects (Shiahs and Sunnis) of the faithful among themselves (than with the Hindus); an increasing

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* See Chapter II and Chapter XVI.

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opposition having within these few years been organized by the Soonees against the practice of celebrating the Mohurram within the precincts of the *musjids*, and of carrying the *tazeea* (a model of the mausoleum at Kerbala containing the tomb of the Imam) in public procession, and giving it regular burial at the conclusion of the festival....'

Although detailed accounts of actual events are not available, hints of old dissensions could be sensed even now from interviews with local Muslims. In spite of this, the sense of unity and cordiality between them was remarkably strong. This solidarity was evident on several occasions, but most notably in times of communal disturbances.

THE JAINAS

Unfriendly relations between the Shvetambara and Digambara sects of the Jainas are documented and at least one incident of open confrontation between them during this period was reported to us.[5] On the whole, however, they were a peace-loving people.

INTERRELIGIOUS COMMUNITY RELATIONS : HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

Though the other religions of Indian origin, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, had many things in common with Hinduism, collectively there were far fewer followers of these faiths.* Besides Hinduism, the only religion with a large number of followers was Islam, a faith of foreign origin. The other faith of foreign origin, Christianity, had an insignificant number of followers here.

Relations between Hindus and Muslims are an important study during our period since they formed the two major communities of the City. Consequently, due to their numbers, the impact of this relationship could not remain merely confined to these two groups, but would affect the City as a whole. As a matter of fact, this study also indicates how these two major communities of India coexisted in other parts of the country as well during this time. Presumably, a considerable number of local Indians had been converted to Islam from Hinduism during Muslim rule. On the other hand, foreign Muslims had adopted an Indian way of life to a great extent, having lived in the City for extended periods or generations.

But certain fundamental differences in outlook between Muslims and Hindus, especially regarding socio-religious customs, stood as a barrier to the establishment of true rapport between them. For example, we may take

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* See Chapter III.

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note of their respective attitudes towards the cow. While the Hindus regarded the cow as the visible form of the goddess Bhagavati, Muslims slaughtered them for food. This act obviously hurt the sentiments of Hindus, especially in a place considered to be the centre of orthodox Hinduism. This did not escape the notice of foreign travellers of the nineteenth century. One records :

> 'The Musulman inhabitants do not choose to relinquish their *kababs* in consideration of the religious scruples of their Hindu neighbours, and kill and eat without ceremony. They have established butcher shops in some of the principal thoroughfares of the City.'[6]

In addition to these socio-religious factors, past history played a vital role in moulding relations between the two. The atrocities Muslims committed against Hindus during their rule in the period prior to our study had not been forgotten, especially when living monuments to such violences, such as Aurangzeb's mosques on the sites of the former Vishwanatha and Bindumadhava temples, were still to be seen. These monuments to Muslim vandalism fanned the fire of Hindu wrath against them, while on the other hand, the suzerainty of the Muslims over the Hindus in the recent past was a fond and proud memory from the Muslim point of view. It is in this context that a British traveller makes an illuminating as well as prophetic comment when she writes :

> 'It is highly probable that while a vestige of these ancient buildings broken by the Muslims remains their (Hindu and Muslim) animosity will not subside.'[7]

Thus differences in socio-religious ideas and perceptions of historical events led to the stressed and strained relations that continued between the two communities. The extent of enmity between the two communities became quite evident on the occasion of the Hindu-Muslim conflicts of 1805 and 1809.

In 1805, when Muslims toppled and defiled the pillar called Lat Bhimsen and the images at Lat Imambara, hostilities erupted. In this connection, Prinsep reports in his aforementioned *Benares Illustrated* (p. 49) :

> 'It was under such a state of excited zeal (during Muharam) that a congregation at the Lat'h Imumbareh in 1805 was urged by some fanatic preacher to overthrow and defile the pillar and images of Hindoo worship at that place; the imprudent feat, however, caused a furious reaction and might have ended in the extermination of the weaker party throughout the town, but for the judicious intervention of Mr. W. W. Bird, then Magistrate, and the really docile and submissive temper of the Hindoos.'

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Heber leaves the following detailed account regarding the conflict of 1809 :

'Only one instance of the military being called has occurred at Benares during the last twenty-five years, which was an occasion of a quarrel.... At that time Mr. Bird was Magistrate, and he gave me a far more formidable idea of the tumult than I had previously formed. One half of the population was literally armed against the other, and the fury which actuated both was more demoniacal than that of rational enemies. It began by the Mussalmans breaking down a famous pillar named Siva's walking staff, held in high veneration by the Hindoos. These last (the Hindoos) in revenge burnt and broke down a mosque, and the retort of the first (the Mussulmans) aggressors was to kill a cow and pour her blood into the sacred well. In consequence every Hindoo able to bear arms, and many who had no other fitness for the employment than rage supplied, procured weapons and attacked their enemies with frantic fury wherever they met them. Being the most numerous party, they put the Mussulmans in danger of actual extermination, and would certainly have at least burned every mosque in the place before twenty-four hours were over, if the Sepoys had not been called in.... The sepoys, however, were immovable. Regarding their military oath as the most sacred of all obligations, they fired at a Brahmin as readily as at any one else, and kept ground at the gate of a mosque as faithfully and fearlessly as if it had been the gate of one of their own temples. Their courage and steadiness preserved Benares from ruin.

One observation of some of the Hindoo Sepoys was remarkable. The pillar, the destruction of which led to all the tumult, had originally stood in one of the Hindoo temples which were destroyed by Aurangzeb, and mosques built over them. In the mosque, however, it still was suffered to exist, and pilgrimages were made to it by the Hindoos through the connivance of the Mussalmans, in consequence of their being allowed to receive half of all the offerings made there. It was a very beautiful shaft of one stone, forty feet high, and covered with exquisite carving. This carving gave offence to several zealous Mohammedans, but the quarrel which hastened its destruction arose as I have stated, from the unfortunate rencontre of the rival processions.'

Heber next describes the sequel of the Hindu versus Muslim encounter and the defilement of Varanasi and the Ganga by the Muslims as follows :

'After the tumult was quelled, a very curious and impressive scene succeeded; the holy City had been profaned; the blood of a cow had been mixed with purest water of Ganga, and salvation was to be obtained at Benares no longer. All the Brahmins in the City, amounting to many thousands, went down in melancholy processions, with ashes on their heads naked and fasting to the principal *ghats* leading to the river, and sat there with their hands folded, their heads hanging down, to all appearance inconsolable, and refusing to enter a house or to taste food. Two or three days of this abstinence, however, began to tire them, and a hint was given to Magistrate and other public men, that a visit of condolence and an expression of sympathy with these holy mourners would sufficiently comfort them and give them an ostensible reason for returning to their usual employment.

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Accordingly, all the British functionaries went to the principal *ghat*, expressed their sorrow for the distress in which they saw them, but reasoned with them on the absurdity of punishing themselves for an act in which they had no share, and which they had done their utmost to prevent or avenge. This prevailed, and after much bitter weeping, it was resolved that Ganges was Ganges still, that a succession of costly offerings from the City of Benares might wipe out the stain which their religion had received, and that the advice of the judges, was most reasonable. Mr. Bird, who was one of the ambassadors on this occasion, told me that the scene was very impressive and even awful. The gaunt squalid figures of the devotees, their visible and, apparently, unaffected anguish and the great number thus assembled, altogether constituted a spectacle of woe that only Benares could supply.'[8]

The Government, which went to great pains to quiet this clash, reacted sharply against those who were reported to have had some involvement in it. George Swinton, Deputy Personal Secretary to the Government issued the following strong letter on December 19, 1809, to Biswambhar Pandit, *Vakeel* from the Raja of Nagpur, for his alleged role in the tumult :[9]

'Having lately had occasion to express my cordial approbation of the exemplary conduct of some of the principal inhabitants of Benares, on the occurrence of the recent disturbance in that City, I cannot but sincerely lament the necessity which is now imposed upon me of addressing so old and faithful an adherent of the British Government in the language of displeasure and reproof.

The reports which I have received from Mr. Bird the Acting Magistrate and Mr. Watson the Judge and Magistrate of Benares, of the circumstances of your conduct on that occasion, have excited sentiments of equal surprise and regret.

By these reports it appears, that while some other distinguished characters of the same persuasion with yourself were manifesting a proper sense of duty to the Government and a just confidence in the solicitude which it has uniformly evinced to protect every class of it's native subjects in the free and undisturbed exercise of their respective religions, you and those under your influence were secretly instigating and encouraging the deluded and lawless populace to acts of violence and revenge. It further appears that you not only gave your secret countenance and support to meetings and conferences held by those of your own persuasion for purposes of the most objectionable nature, in direct opposition to the Civil power, but that you openly professed in the presence of the Acting Magistrate himself sentiments calculated to irritate and influence the passions of the deluded multitude.

By your intemperate and inconsiderate proceedings on this occasion, you have not only subjected yourself to the displeasure of Government, but you have been instrumental in involving others of your faith in the legal penalties due to the very serious offences of which they have been guilty....'

The official observation regarding the 1809 disturbances was that while the Muslims were the first aggressors, Hindus, by their superiority of number, had wrought the most severe damage.[10]

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The study of the Hindu-Muslim riot of 1809 is important for students of history and sociology dealing with Hindu-Muslim relations in the City, in particular, and in India, in general, for it was possibly the first widespread Hindu-Muslim riot in British India.

The British administration looked upon this incident mainly from the point of law and order and were visibly displeased with the Hindus who took an active part in it. For Hindus, however, the riot assumed a different colour. After six hundred years of Muslim subjugation, this was the first occasion that Hindus of Varanasi had given a physical and violent expression to the deep indignation and hatred which had been accumulating against the tyranny and high-handedness of most of the Muslim rulers. In this changed milieu, when Muslims no longer held administrative power in their hands, any aggressiveness on their part had every likelihood of being thus opposed and retaliated to. Hindus had already been aggrieved and agitated to such an extent by Muslims, that the slightest provocation would in all probability end in an attack on Muslim lives, property, and religion. At the same time, such attacks proved to pave the way for the growth of a vicious cycle of vendetta and counter-vendetta. Thus, the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1805 and 1809, which, unfortunately, were almost inevitable, for historical and theological reasons, and to which later was added the political reason, were only the precursor of a series of riots between these communities that were to follow in later years, not only in Varanasi, but throughout India.

In truth, the demolishing of mosques as an act of revenge could not be justified by the tenets of Hinduism, which are characterized by religious tolerance. But one could argue that the Hindus considered the demolition a just reprisal against the intolerance of Muslims who had repeatedly inflicted severe casualties on Hindus in the past. As a matter of fact, it was through such acts of resistance and counterattacks that Hindus sent a message to the Muslims that the situation had changed with the advent of British rule and that there were no longer Muslim rulers to encourage and patronize them in attacks on the life, property, and religion of the Hindus. This also made the Muslims feel insecure, for they realized that had the British Government not made a timely and forceful intervention they would have been subjected to even greater levels of violence or even near extinction within the City. Muslims became all the more concerned to secure their place in the City by any means possible, from the encouragement of higher birthrates to the purchase of lands and buildings in and around Muslim sectors and elsewhere.[11]

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As observed by European travellers, other instances of ill will between Hindus and Muslims were not lacking. One British traveller, Mrs Alexander Deane, writes in the early 1800s :

> 'The City has never been completely conquered by the Mahomedans between whom and their Hindu neighbours no good understanding prevails. It requires no little vigilance on the part of the British Government to keep them tolerably civil to each other. Half the City is inhabited by Hindoos, the other half by Mussulmen, as perfectly distinct as if the divisions were marked by a line, yet, during their festivals, it is the most difficult thing in the world to prevent their interfering with each other. It is a system of policy on the part of the English to protect, as far as is in their power, the religious ceremonies of both; since it is chiefly owing to these means that we keep our possessions in the country.'[12]

The British administration was fully aware of the ever present possibility of clashes between the two and made special arrangements for security and took other suitable measures, such as issuing necessary instructions to both communities when festivals like the Hindu *Charrak Puja* and the Muharram of the Muslims coincided.[13] The Government was not only able to restrict the areas and scope of confrontations, but actually averted their occurrence to a great extent.

The following letter gives a typical example of the precautionary measures taken by the Government when Hindu and Muslim festivals were likely to coincide when Dowdeswell, Secretary to the Governor-General, writes to James Stuart, the Magistrate of the City on March 27, 1805 :

> 'His excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General-in-Council on adverting to the approaching Ceremonies of the Muharram and *Charrak Puja* directs me so that you will give particular attention to the prevention of disturbances on those occasions in the city of Benares. This precaution appears to His Excellency in Council to be the more necessary from the coincidence of the Charrak Puja with the later part of the Muharram.
>
> With a view to the more effectual preservation of the peace of the City you are directed to cause all arrack, *toddy*, and *ganjah* shops to be shut during the last five days of the Muharram, and to prevent entirely the sale of intoxicating liquors and drugs during that time.
>
> The Governor-General-in-Council is further of opinion that particular hours should be fixed and certain places assigned for the performance of the Hindu and Mohamedan ceremonies respectively so far as may be consistent with their religious opinions, without permitting either tribe to parade through the streets indiscriminately. This precaution would appear to be more particularly requisite after the commencement of the Charrak Puja until the terminations of Muharram in order to prevent disputes between the Mohamedans and Hindus in the celebrations of their respective ceremonies.

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In addition to the measures above suggested you will of course order such guards either of police officers or of Sepoys to be stationed in different parts of the City as shall appear to you to be necessary for the maintenance of general tranquility.'[14]

It would be unfair to conclude from the preceding accounts that there was no meeting ground between local Hindus and Muslims or that the two groups avoided personal or business relationships. On the contrary, there is much evidence of cooperation between them. In the fields of business and cottage industries, especially of silk, commingling of skills and assets was common and regular. Craftsmen of the famous Varanasi silk clothing industry were mostly Muslims, while silk merchants were mainly Hindus; Hindu aristocrats had Muslim servants and vice versa;[15] and, interestingly enough, Muslims also numbered among the staff of some Hindu temples.[16]

Thus, in business and other matters Hindus and Muslims met freely, which left a positive impact. Though not in large numbers, common participation in certain fairs, festivals and musical programmes also had some bearing on relationships. Festivals like the *Holi* and *Buḍhwamangal* and fairs like the *Gazi Miyah Mela*[17] and *Diwali Mela*[18] were some of these occasions. Valentia records that the Holi festival was observed with great spirit by both Hindus and Muslims.[19] Mir Rustam Ali, the Governor of Benares in the eighteenth century, would play Holi at his palace, a painting of which is still preserved at the Bharat Kala Bhavan of Banaras Hindu University.[20] Occasions such as these helped to establish informal relations, but such relations were more on a personal than on a class level. Moreover, there were occasional gestures of goodwill by Muslims to the Hindu faith. In one such instance, Prince Mirza Khurrum erected a wall for the Pishachmochan Temple.

These were but a few of the positive aspects of Hindu-Muslim relations. It is a pity that no conscious and deliberate attempts were reported to have been made during our period to proceed along these lines to bring about further rapport between these two major communities to the benefit and well-being of both. The local populace, though peace-loving, failed to strengthen or even maintain the ideals of religious harmony preached by saints like Kabir, who hailed from Varanasi itself.

In such an atmosphere it was only inevitable that fanatically motivated

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people would incite the many Hindu-Muslim riots that erupted in the City after 1809.

HINDUS AND JAINAS

Extensive information regarding Hindu and Jaina relations is not available. While this makes it difficult to form a clear idea about this subject, bits and pieces of information are available.

For example, Heber records :

> 'Jains are... held in detestation by the Hindoos, but who agree with them in their adoration of the Ganges and in their esteem for Benares.'[21]

Again, when Raja Daalchand and other Oswals, a branch of the Jainas, were contemplating the construction of a Jaina temple in the proximity of the Hindu temple of Sri Gopalji at Chowkhamba, Hindus objected. Mahadaji Sindhia takes up this issue with the Governor-General when he writes :

> '...as there is a great difference between the faith and belief of the two parties (i.e., Hindus and Jains) and such construction of a Jaina temple could entail a breach of public peace.'

In requesting the Governor-General to prohibit the Oswals from erecting the proposed temple in the interest of public tranquillity, orders were sent to Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, then Magistrate, to not allow Daalchand or other Oswals to build any temple,[22] not only at the proposed site near Sri Gopalji Temple, but in any other part of the City as well.[23]

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS

Designed as a value-oriented society with spiritual freedom as its goal, religion became the main source of almost all Hindu social customs as well. And though notably liberal in matters of religion, narrow discrimination and various superstitions evolved in Hindu social life, preventing the development of a creative and strong homogeneous unit. A brief description of the different facets of the socio-religious customs of the City is given below.

The Varnas—In the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord said that He created four castes according to the *guna* and *karma* of individuals.[24] Historically, circumstances leading to the origin of caste indicate that at a certain stage in its development, Aryan society had begun to grow haphazardly with the emergence of diverse segments of the population. In a design to bring

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order to society, as well as to make it purposeful, strong and creative, a system of four *varnas* (social divisions); Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, was evolved. The idea was to take into consideration the abilities and aptitude of each person, giving each scope for his fullest development. Thus, the son of a Shudra could become a Brahmin or Kshatriya, provided he had the necessary aptitude and ability, but with the passage of time the caste-system lost its flexibility and caste became determined by birth alone. Even worse, the upper castes, especially Brahmins, demanded greater privileges and prerogatives at the cost of the lower castes. Consequently, the plight of the lower castes, especially the Shudra, knew no bounds as they were subjected to humiliation and exploitation and were deprived of most human rights and privileges. Religious reformers like Sri Chaitanya, Nanak and Kabir tried to reduce caste oppression in Hindu society, but with only limited success.

Such was the state of affairs prevailing in Hindu society in almost every corner of India. Curiously enough, in Varanasi, where customary caste restrictions regarding food and drink, marriage, the reading of the Vedas,* etc., existed, liberalism was not absolutely lacking. What is most remarkable is that compared to South India, there was little caste oppression in Varanasi.[25] In addition to the example of liberalism in the caste system that has already been cited,** other examples may be also mentioned. Persons of inferior caste could not offer '*pakki*' dishes to the superior ones, but this tenet didn't apply where '*kachchi*' dishes were concerned. '*kachchi rasoi*' meant food cooked without salt and water, while '*pakki rasoi*' meant food cooked with them. Sweetmeats like *doodh perhas*, *barfis*, etc., or kachchi rasoi, were accepted and consumed irrespective of the hand that had prepared and distributed them. Pakki rasoi foodstuffs included *pooris*, *chapatis*, rice, etc., and these were not consumed even by a Shudra from a Brahmin's hand without due enquiries.[26] *Drishti dosha*, the pollution of food by people of lower castes merely gazing upon it, was generally not observed in the City either.[27]

Losing and Regaining Caste—Loss of caste could be caused by two principal offences; first, violation of rules and regulations prescribed by the scriptures, and secondly, violation of current conventions regarding food, drink, marriage, mixing with the wrong persons and a hundred other

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* See History of the Sanskrit College : Chapter XIII.

** See page 129 of this Chapter.

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petty things relating to various customs.[28] Loss of caste meant that the incumbent would be isolated and boycotted socially. He would not be invited, nor would his invitation be accepted, to any social or religious function. Further, no one would visit him nor would he be allowed to visit anyone else.

In some cases, caste could be regained by undergoing *prayashchitta*, or rituals of penance, under the direction of priests and in accordance to the injunctions of the scriptures.[29] Here is an account of a case of the recovery of caste by an eyewitness :[30]

> 'As we approached the city (Varanasi) we were induced to moor our budgerow and land in order that we might witness the *Charrak Puja*, one of those revolting inflictions which some particular orders of devotees undergo, together with such unhappy Hindus as have had the misfortune to lose their caste; the former to enhance their claims to a blessed immortality, the latter to recover that temporal superiority over a large portion of their fellow-beings which the well-known distinction of caste confers....
>
> On landing we found a large concourse of people assembled, and forming a circle of about twenty yards in diameter in the centre of which was a strong pole fixed upright in the ground. On the top of this pole a transverse bamboo, sufficiently strong to sustain the weight of a man, was attached to a moveable pivot so that it could be swung either vertically or circularly as occasion might require. The insertion of the transverse bamboo was about one-third part from the end, leaving two-thirds on the other side, to which was attached a cord that reached the ground. At the extremity of the shorter division was a pulley from which a strong cord depended about the size of a man's middle finger, having two ends to which were affixed a pair of bright steel hooks. Both the vertical and cross poles were of bamboo, which is extremely tough and difficult to break. When the apparatus was prepared a Brahmin, who is usually the functionary on these occasions, advanced to the centre of the area, and having anointed the points of the hooks with a small portion of *ghee* from a sacred vessel especially set apart for this holy purpose, he beckoned to the person about to undergo this trying ordeal. The penitentiary was a handsome man, in the full vigour of manhood, who had lost his caste by eating interdicted food during a voyage from Calcutta to China, whither he had gone as servant to the captain of the ship....
>
> After this ceremony, as a part of which the hooks were inserted in the back of the incumbent, had continued for about twenty minutes, the man was let down, the hooks extracted from his back and he really seemed little or nothing the worse for the torture he must have undergone. He walked steadily forward amid the acclamations of the surrounding multitude, and followed by his friends, who earnestly offered him their congratulations on the recovery of his caste.'

The Ashramas—According to the injunctions of Hindu scriptures, each individual is required to pass through four stages of life, *brahmacharya, garhasthya, vanaprastha* and *sannyasa*, i.e., a life of

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celibacy and study, a householder's life, a life as a recluse, and finally, a life of absolute renunciation. This scheme was designed in such a way that everyone could undergo all the experiences of life and finally work out one's own salvation, the ultimate and highest goal of human life. In exceptional cases one could jump to renunciation from the very first stage. This scheme of life was not scrupulously followed by all, however, and while there were many who went through the first two or three, not many would enter into a life of renunciation.

In the City there were, of course, people at all these stages of life. What is remarkable, however, is that a far greater number of people lived as *vanaprasthis* and *sannyasis* side by side with students and householders in Varanasi than in most other parts of India.

Many householders, especially Brahmins, tried to lead a life as enjoined in scriptures such as the *Mahanirvana Tantra*. Their domestic life was marked by three main features : First, devotion to deities, monks and other Brahmins, and respect for elders. Second, performance of five types of daily sacrifice; *brahmayajna*, meditation, *japa* and the reading of the scriptures; *devayajna*, the performance of *homa* and similar sacrifices for pleasing the gods; *pitriyajna*, offering of water and the like for pleasing departed ancestors; *nriyajna*, service to man, charity, etc.; and *bhutayajna*, service to lower animals by feeding and caring for them. Third is the practice of the five types of *samskaras*; rituals relating to birth, to the coming of age (sacred thread ceremony), to study, to marriage and to death.

In this regard Prinsep records :

> 'Every family of respectability maintains an establishment for the service of their family's religious rites: a *gooroo* or pundit to give the *muntras*, or benedictions and absolutions, who also serves as a tutor for the children; a *purohit* or priest, to perform the ceremonies of marriage, *sradd'h*, or the worship of manes, etc.; and a *poojera*, or under-priest, to go through the ordinary routines of *pooja* to the *Thakoors* [gods] in the sanctuary on *Thakoor-dwaree*: he has to clean their altars, to administer the daily offerings of rice, flowers and incense; to cook their dinner.... Each member of the family is expected also to repair morning and evening to the sanctuary to offer up his own petitions.'[31]

Predominance of Monks and Brahmins—In the Hindu society of the City, as elsewhere in India, monks and Brahmins as a class were dominant, and of these two, monks occupied a higher position. Evidence of this comes from seventeenth century literary sources.[32] Among Brahmins, the Gauḍas of Bengal and Orissa formed a special class called

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Kulin. They were considered superior to other Brahmins and they demanded honour and privilege from the rest of the members of their community. An Indian traveller to Varanasi mentions this same development among the local Utkala Gauḍa Brahmins of Varanasi when he writes :

> 'I have noticed an injustice among the *Utkal Gauḍa Brahmins*. Some years ago, some Brahmins following Shastric concepts claimed to have become "Kulinas". With the view that their families would acquire sanctified status if their daughters were given in marriage to Kulinas, only rich Brahmins of this sect have been paying large sums and giving their daughters in marriage to Kulina Brahmins, who are in short supply compared to the demand for them. This resulted in a Kulina Brahmin being wedded to 20 to 30 maids at a time. The Kulina bridegroom does not usually stay with his wife even for a night thereafter unless he is given further sums of money. The virtuous among Brahmin brides have therefore been undergoing torture, while the fickle minded have been breaking the bonds of virtue in desperation.'[33]

In total, Brahmins formed the majority caste, and though there were some Kulins as noted above, the City was comparatively free of this practice which was especially rampant in Bengal. In fact, *Shrotriyas*, another branch of Brahmins, were regarded by local society as more than equal to other Brahmins. The following proverb, then current among the monks of the City, indicated this distinction :

श्रोत्रिय से भोजन मांगना चाहिए।
उसके अभाव में पानी पीना चाहिए ॥[34]

> 'One should beg food (alms) from the *Shrotriyas*;
> And if one can't get food (from them) dine on water (that day)'.

While Shrotriyas enjoyed the highest status among Brahmins, *Gangaputras*, on the other hand, were regarded least. If any Brahmin, however, should become a scholar of repute, he would be highly venerated by the whole of Hindu society, irrespective of caste status.

Social Groups and their Leaders—The rise of social groups and their leadership is a natural phenomenon of almost every society. In Varanasi too, while chiefs of state or the officers appointed by them dealt more with official and formal matters, issues of a social nature, such as family and community matters, were handled by these heads of society. Even minor issues of a judicial nature, regarding monetary transactions, law and order, matrimonial affairs, succession, etc., were brought to a leader and his court for settlement. If the affair could not be settled to the

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satisfaction of the parties concerned, the matters were then referred to government officials. In a place such as Varanasi, that had long been governed by alien rulers, these local leaders must have exercised considerable power over their native communities. The Brahmins of Kashi were organized into groups or unions, called *Stomas* or *Tadulu*. Each of these groups had a chairman by whose name the group was called, such as the *Jalam Bhatta Stoma* or *Rajendra Babu Tadulu*. These unions were generally friendly with each other. The *Sabha Puja*, or honouring the leaders of these groups, had to be conducted ceremonially, acknowledging their worth as to honour, special ability, etc.[35] In all probability, other castes had similar unions and leaders as well. In addition, there were also the *panchayet*, a body of local people in each mahalla that exercised control over the affairs of the respective mahallas.[36] This 'panchayet' system was reported to have been more elaborately perfected among the Muslim community and carried a long tradition.[37]

Passing One's Last Days and Dying in Kashi—As was pointed out in the first chapter, to pass one's last days in Kashi—especially within *Antargriha*, the inner zone, to die here, to have one's body burnt at Manikarnika Ghat, and to have one's ashes thrown into the Ganga, all were among the most cherished aspirations of the devout Hindu. Naturally, thousands of Hindus flocked to the City to fulfil these desires. It was customary to shift a dying person to the bank of the Ganga and keep him or her there until the end came. This custom was called *Jalashayee*. Even today, the existence of Jalashayee Ghat near Manikarnika Ghat indicates the continued practice of this rite.

Infanticide—The custom of infanticide was practised here in the eighteenth century. A first-born would be sacrifised to the Ganga in accordance with some pledge made to the Lord for achieving some personal or family gain. Sometimes female children were sacrifised in expectation of male children. Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident of Varanasi, got this practice stopped by law.

Nevertheless, there were still occassional incidents of child-sacrifice. One such incident was authenticated by a Rev. Hobart Caunter, who visited the City around the third decade of the nineteenth century.[38] Another account of child sacrifice with a gruesome painting depicting the same, was left by C. J. S. Davidson in 1893, who got his information from

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a Muslim. Davidson, however, doubts the authenticity of this information when he observes :

> 'A Musselman would never lose an opportunity of placing the religious conduct of the Hindoos in the most odious light possible.'[39]

Self-immolation by Drowning and Starvation—Self-immolation by drowning in the Ganga and *prayopaveshana* (to starve oneself to death) were not uncommon in the City and were reported to be greater in number than incidents of *Satidaha*, a ritualistic death by fire practised by widows (discussed later in this chapter).

On this topic Heber writes :

> '*Suttees* are less numerous in Benares than in many parts of India, but self-immolation by drowning is very common. Many scores of pilgrims from all parts of India come hither expressly to end their days and secure their salvation. They purchase two large *Kedghee* pots between which they tie themselves, and when empty these support their weight in the water. Thus equipped, they paddle into the stream, then fill the pots with the water which surrounds them and thus sink into eternity. Government have sometimes attempted to prevent this practice, but with no other effect than driving the voluntary victims a little further down the river. Nor, indeed when a man has come several hundred miles to die, is it likely that a police officer can prevent him.'[40]

Mrs Hariette Ashmore, another traveller of 1834, corroborates Heber writing :

> 'Many drown themselves in the sacred river in its immediate neighbourhood, and the number who annually perish through wilful starvations is stated to exceed belief.'[41]

Examples of self-starvation and drowning in the Ganga are given by Jadunath Sarbadhikari,[42] a Bengali traveller, and also by William Hunter, a British traveller, in his 'Narrative'.[43]

Kashi Karbat—Kashi Karbat was a sacred and renowned well situated just to the east of the Adi-Vishweshwara Temple. In addition to its vertical opening, there was a passage leading down to the water that was used by scores of devout Hindus. In mediaeval Varanasi, at the instigation of *pandas*, pilgrims desirous of getting instant salvation jumped into the well to meet death by falling on a blade positioned there. Aurangzeb stopped this inhuman practice, although there were still the odd instances of such religious suicide.[44] Sherring also refers to one such incident in which a fanatic offered himself in sacrifice to Shiva, the God of the well.[45] Consequently, local authorities closed the passage to the well. Attending priests protested that their revenues would suffer greatly were it to be kept

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permanently shut and permission was given for the passage to be opened on Monday of each week.[46]

Relics Thrown into the Ganga at Kashi—Having one's relics tossed into the Ganga at Varanasi was a custom practised by many people who could not come to the City to pass away. To satisfy the desire of the deceased and his relatives, and also as a meritorious act, the throwing of relics of the dead into the Ganga was very much in vogue and such relics were carried here from near and far. When the King of Tanjore passed away in 1801, his body was cremated.[47] After two days, ashes and remnants of bone that had not been entirely consumed were collected, put into copper urns, and carefully sealed with the signet of the new king. Some time later, thirty Brahmins were selected to carry these relics to Kashi and throw them into the sacred waters of the Ganga. They were promised valuable presents if, upon their return, they could produce authenticated certificates verifying that they had faithfully executed the task entrusted to them.[48]

Funeral Rites—There were detailed funeral rituals for Hindus as prescribed by the scriptures, but there were variations in funeral customs among different castes, monks and householders, men and women, adults and children, and for persons dying of natural and unnatural causes. For instance, the bodies of householders were burnt, while those of monks were immersed in water. The funeral ceremony, *shrāddha*, was held at the end of a period of mourning for paying homage to and ensuring the spiritual welfare of the departed soul.

Ordeals—The ordeals practised for seeking justice or redressing grievances will be discussed in detail in Chapter XIX—Law and Order.

Vows of Silence—A vow of silence was more a personal discipline than a social one. It was also either self-imposed or prescribed as a mode of punishment and/or purification. For example, the Raja of Chunderry, Ramchunder by name, is reported to have come to the City and have been under a religious vow of silence for a certain period. This punishment, recommended by Brahmins, was undergone by the Raja to avert the evil effects of a certain crime he had committed.[49]

Crossing of the Sea—According to some of the Hindu *Dharma-shastras* (law books) it was forbidden to cross the sea, the undertaking of which would entail the loss of caste.

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It is interesting to note that around the third quarter of the eighteenth century two monks from Varanasi crossed the ocean and travelled to countries near and far.[50] It is not known how this was received by society, but as we have seen, one man who had lost his caste by crossing the ocean on a voyage to China had to regain it through a prescribed ordeal.*

There was a difference of opinion among Hindu codifiers regarding the propriety of restrictions on crossing the sea, which had been designed to protect the native religion, culture and society from contact and contamination by foreign customs. This issue raised a great stir in Calcutta and was referred to the Varanasi pandits for their opinion. The pandits ruled that a person who took a sea-voyage to a foreign land might be taken back into society provided he underwent *prayashchitta* after returning.[51]

Prayashchitta—We have already been given some examples of prayashchitta. This custom was introduced to punish and purify an offender who had committed any unethical or irreligious act, or had violated any socio-religious customs of the land. It involved certain religious rites, including the feeding of Brahmins, giving of donations, paying of fines, etc. After these rites were observed, the lost social status would be reinstated. The young grandson of the celebrated scholar of Varanasi, Kakaram Pandit, also performed prayashchitta at the latter's bidding in August 1851, as was published in the *Kashivartaprakashika*, a Bengali fortnightly of Varanasi.[52]

Marriage—The custom of early marriage was in vogue in the City. The dowry system was also prevalent here, but it was the party of the bridegroom who had to pay a dowry. Marriage between members of different religions or castes was, of course, forbidden. Unlike in Bengal, polygamy among Brahmins was not rampant here, yet some examples, can be found.[53] Again, there were some married persons, especially, aristocrats, who kept mistresses.[54] There was absolutely no polyandry. The Widow Marriage Act and Civil Marriage Act, passed by the British Government, had virtually no impact on the people of the City. No account of any citizen of Varanasi having taken advantage of these acts with respect to marriage during our period has been found.

Satidaha—The most important and much talked about socio-religious custom during this period was Satidaha, meaning the burning of the

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* See the discussion on the loss of caste in the present chapter.

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widow. The widow would burn herself along with her deceased husband in the expectation that they would not be separated even in death, and that they would again meet and live together in the next world or even in the next birth. Satidaha was of two types; *sahagamana*, self-immolation with the corpse of the deceased husband, and *anugamana*, to immolate oneself upon hearing the news of the death of one's husband whose body was not present. The scriptures did not allow every woman to become a *Sati*, only the legal wives of upper caste Hindus were eligible to practise this rite.

The rules regarding the institution of Satidaha in Varanasi, observed in conformity with the *Dharmashastra* of the time, were as follows: The *sankalpa*, or declaration, consisted of an announcement of the time and place by the widow who was then to be decorated with minium (vermillion sulphide) and collyrium (eye salve), etc. The widow bestowed presents on the bystanders, then having approached the fire, she would adorn her wrist with five jewels and apply a pearl ornament to her nose. She would then invoke the fire and sacrifice to it, and also to Vishnu, Yama, earth, water, wind, ether, Brahma and Rudra, by offering an oblation of clarified butter; she then walked thrice round the fire worshipping her household utensils; then holding flowers in her hand she would again invoke the fire saying, 'O Fire! Thou secretly pervadest all beings. Thou, O Deity, knowest what mortals are ignorant of ! Being afflicted with the dread of widowhood, I follow my Lord! Conduct me to my husband by the path of constancy !' Having uttered this text, she would deliberately enter the flames.[55]

Some special customs that deviated from the general rules and practice were current in Bengal and Varanasi, as is evident from the written statements of pandits.[56]

William Hodges, one of the early British painters visiting India, came to the City in 1781. He leaves the following graphic description of a Satidaha in Varanasi :

> 'While I was pursuing my professional labours in Benares, I received information of a ceremony, which was to take place on the banks of the river, and which greatly excited my curiosity.... The person whom I saw was of the *Vaishya* tribe or caste.... Upon my reparing to the spot on the banks of the river, where the ceremony was to take place, I found the body of the man on a bier, and covered with linen, already brought down and laid at the edge of the river. At this time, about ten in the morning, only a few people were assembled, who appeared destitute of feeling at the catastrophe that was to take place; I may even say that they displayed the most perfect apathy and indifference.

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After waiting a considerable time the wife appeared, attended by the *Brahmins*, and music, with some few relations. The procession was slow and solemn. The victim moved with a steady and firm step; and apparently with a perfect composure of countenance, approached close to the body of her husband, where for some time they halted. She then addressed those who were near her with composure and without the least trepidation of voice or change of countenance. She held in her left hand a coconut (shell), in which was a red colour, mixed up, and dipping in it the forefinger of her right hand she marked those near, to whom she wished to show the last act of attention. As at this time I stood close to her, she observed me attentively, and with the colour marked me on the forehead.

She might be about twenty-four or five years of age, a time of life when the bloom of beauty has generally fled the cheek in India; but still she preserved a sufficient share to prove that she must have been handsome; her figure was small, but elegantly turned; and the form of her hands and arms was particularly beautiful. Her dress was a loose robe of white flowing drapery, that extended from her head to the feet.

The place of sacrifice was higher up on the bank of the river, a hundred yards or more from the spot where we now stood. The pile was composed of dried branches, leaves and rushes, with a door on one side and arched and covered on the top. By the side of the door stood a man with a lighted brand. From the time the woman appeared, to the taking up of the body, to conveying it into the pile might occupy a space of half an hour, which was employed in prayer with the *Brahmins*, in attention to those who stood near her, and in conversation with her relations.

When the body was taken up she followed close to it, attended by the chief Brahmin; and when it was deposited in the pile, she bowed to all around her, and entered without speaking. The moment she entered, the door was closed; the fire was put to the combustibles, which instantly flamed, and immense quantities of dried wood and other matters were thrown upon it. This last part of the ceremony was accompanied with the shouts of the multitude, who now became numerous, and the whole seemed a mass of confused rejoicing.

For my part, I felt myself actuated by very different sentiments.... When the melancholy which had overwhelmed me was somewhat abated, I made a drawing of the subject.'[57]

No written statement given by Satis in the City during British rule could, however, be procured. But official statements from the years 1815 to 1818 and again in 1824, prepared by the Magistrate of the City, have been taken from parliamentary papers printed in 1821 and 1827. These statements, in addition to descriptions made by others, show how the administration used force, when necessary, to thwart those who were not eligible to become Sati by Hindu scriptures. Information from statement records, a short account of how some widows were actually prevented from becoming Satis and observations of the Magistrate on such cases follow :

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STATEMENT OF SATI IN 1815[58]

Name	Age/Caste	Name and caste of husband	Date of burning	Police jurisdiction
Rookmin	75, Brahmin	Krishna Bhat/Brahmin	2 Jan.	City
Koomer Thakoorain	60, Do	Ramgovind/Brahmin	31 Jan.	Do
Doorga Bai	18, Brahmin	Chinramun/Brahmin	7 Feb.	Do
Tarini Bai	60, Do	Gungadhur	19 Mar.	Do
Chandramani	70, Do	Soodaram/Bidyalankar	11 April	Do
Bechnee	35, Koonbee	Doda/Koonbee	13 April	Thanah Surray Mohun
Jumma Bai	50, Brahmin	Dhoondh Bhat/Brahmin	9 May	City
Bilas Koonur	17, Bhuinhar	Babu Dhounjnarain Singh Bhuinhar	8 July	Do
Juroo Koonur	28, Do	Babu Deokinandan Singh Bhuinhar	17 July	Do
Soorjmani	56, Brahmin	Gopinath/Brahmin	11 Aug.	Do
Cashi Bai	35, Do	Kheydoopant/ Do	24 Sept.	Do
Mundoo Bai	57, Do	Kishanji/Do	24 Sept.	Do
Rukhma Bai	60, Do	Pando Bhat/Do	25 Dec.	Do

During 1815, there were three instances of women prevented from becoming Satis.[59] The first of these three was Buddhee Buneaina, the wife of Hingoo Bukkal of the village of Alinagar, who being only 12 years old at the time of her husband's death, was prohibited by a rule which forbade the burning of women who had not yet reached the age of puberty. The other two were prohibited because they were not the legal wives of the men on whose funeral pyres they desired to end their lives.

Of these two, a Rajputin named Chunderkallah, was the mistress of Kashinath, a Bengalee. Kashinath was killed in the massacre of Indian police officers in Gorakpur (which in part gave rise to the war with Nepal). Upon receiving this news, Chunderkallah was prepared to burn herself with the clothes of her beloved. But, as the deceased was not her husband and the privilege of becoming a Sati was not granted by the court of Nizamut Adalat and the rulings of the pandits, the Magistrate forbade Chunderkallah to perform this rite. By simply informing her that her application for permission to become a Sati could not be complied with, Chunderkallah was dissuaded.

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The other case involves the death of Babu Deokinandan Singh, a man of considerable property and influence, who left, besides a wife, a mistress named Ghurna, a *Gaunharin* who belonged to a community of professional musicians. He had long cohabited with this mistress and she was the mother of his son, then 19 or 20 years old. She and the legal wife, were both preparing to burn themselves on Babu Deokinandan's funeral pyre. Though the wife was allowed to proceed, the unmarried mistress was not. The Magistrate's order in this regard had reached the local government officers just in time. Ghurna was actually in a palanquin on the way to ascend the pyre, but the officers escorted her home—by means of the very same conveyance in which she had been proceeding to the site—without incident. The intervention was not objected to in the least by either Babu Deokinandan Singh's immediate family circle or by others who had gathered at the site.

In the statement on Sati of 1815, sent to the appropriate authority, Bird, Magistrate of the City, observed that it appeared from reports of the police *darogah* that several Sati had failed to obtain the necessary permission and that some among them had acted in direct violation of Hindu scripture. Bird then suggested in the report the following additional rules for adoption and implementation with a view to more effectively checking the incidence of Satidaha :

1. That no act of Sati shall be performed at the Sudder station or within the limits of the *thannahs* immediately adjoining the Sudder station without the previous permission of the magistrate.
2. That the Magistrate be authorized and required to resort to coercive measures to prevent the performance of acts of Sati contrary to established usage.
3. That no woman who is not the acknowledged legal wife of a Hindu shall become Sati.
4. That every Hindu widow, be her caste what it may, though it be lawful for her by the Hindu religion to burn on a pyre with the implements, clothes, and arms of her deceased husband, be restricted from so doing unless she does it immediately upon receiving information of her husband's death.[60]

The purpose of this last rule was to put an end to a practice, not at all uncommon, of becoming a Sati many years subsequent to the husband's death in a fit of caprice or worldly disappointment. These rules suggested by Bird were perhaps not adopted immediately, but in sending the statement of Sati in 1816, Bird again drew the attention of the authorities to the rules suggested by him for adaptation the year before.[61]

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STATEMENT OF SATI DURING 1816[62]

Name	Age & Caste	Name & Caste of husband	Date of burning	Police Jurisdiction
Annapurna Bai	50 /Brahmin	Babooji/Brahmin	19 Feb.	City
Sabita	50/Do	Ramgopal Biswas/Do	2 Mar.	Do
Bhawani	60/ Do	Krishnanand/Do	28 Mar.	Do
Thakuraina		Mukherjee (a surname),		Do
Rajeshwari	84/Kaith	Baluckram/Kaith	7 April	Do
Durga Bai	18/Kherwal	Sambhunath/Kherwal	3 June	Do
Janki Bai	40/Brahmin	Babu Bhiet/Brahmin	6 June	Do
Cakoo Bai	40/Do	Jageswar/Do	12 Aug.	Do
Saraswati	50/Do	Manorath/Do	29 Aug.	Do
Sooja	50/Agarwala	Birju Sahu/Agarwala	20 Oct.	Do
Bala	65/Kussera	Rampershad/Kussera	4 Nov.	Do
Uttam Bai	50/Gungaputra	Gangavishnu/Gungaputra	26 Nov.	Do

During this year, two instances of Sati were prevented. In one, Panchoo, the woman who proposed to burn herself was not the wife but the mistress of a man named Golak Rai. In the other, a Soonarin (caste), who proposed to burn herself with her husband's clothes ten months after his death, was also forbidden by the Magistrate. Both these instances had to be prevented by means of physical force.

Accounts of Sati of 1817, 1818 and 1824 have been placed in the Appendix of this chapter.

Comparing the number of Satidahas taking place in the City with that of other cities and districts of northern and eastern India (as noted in the following table), it is surprising to note that in this great centre of Hinduism—where all sorts of Hindu rituals and customs were practised with the utmost sincerity, where the Hindu population was considerable, and where death itself was glorified—the number of widow-burnings was not as high as one might expect. The statements also show that during the period from 1815 to 1818 altogether 55 widows became Sati in the City, which indicates that there was no craze for Satidaha among the local women. On the contrary, it proves that the inclination of women in general was to die a natural death.

STATEMENT OF SATI BURNT AND/OR BURIED ALIVE DURING 1815, 1816, 1817, AND 1818[63] CENTRIC

	1815	1816	1817	1818	Total
City Varanasi	13	12	16	15	56

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City	1815	1816	1817	1818	Total
Burdwan	50	67	98	132	347
Cuttack & Balasore	9	9	14	11	43
Hooghly	72	51	112	141	376
Jessore	7	13	21	23	64
Jungle Mahals	34	39	43	61	177
Midnapore	4	11	7	22	44
Nudea	50	56	88	80	274
Suburbs of Calcutta	25	40	39	43	147
24 Parganas	2	3	20	31	56
Backergunge	1	5	9	1	16
Chittagong	5	5	6	3	19
City Dacca	4	6	18	25	53
Dacca Jalapore	1	1	5	5	12
Mymunsingh	0	0	1	1	2
Birbhum	1	3	9	4	17
Sylhet	0	0	0	1	1
Tipporah (Tripura)	20	7	13	22	62
(above including buried alive)	(6)	(1)	(8)		
Bhagulpore	3	0	2	0	5
Bhagulpore, joint at Monghyr	0	0	1	0	1
Dinajpore	1	4	6	0	11
Maldah	0	1	1	1	3
City Moorshedabad	3	7	7	6	23
Purneah	2	2	4	1	9
Rungpore	1	5	11	15	32
Ditto Joint	0	0	0	1	1
Rajsahi	0	0	1	2	3
Behar	0	0	0	2	2
City Patna	2	3	5	3	13
Ramghur	2	0	2	4	8
Sarun	12	16	25	23	76
Shahabad	4	9	14	25	52
Tirhoot	0	1	3	0	4
Allahabad	3	2	5	3	13
Ditto joint at Futtehpore	0	0	1	1	2
Bundlecund	7	6	5	11	29
Ditto joint at Calpee	0	0	9	4	13
Goruckpore	14	23	24	50	111
Ditto joint at Azumghar	0	0	9	2	11
Jaunpore	1	3	2	3	9
Ditto joint at Ghazipore	8	15	27	43	93
Mirzapore	2	4	5	5	16
Agrah	0	1	2	1	4

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City	1815	1816	1817	1818	Total
Aligarh	0	0	2	2	4
Bareily	2	1	1	0	4
Caunpore	5	4	3	5	17
Etawah	4	*	3	3	10
Furruckbad	1	0	1	0	2
Moradabad	3	0	0	1	4
Saharanpore, South Division	0	0	1	0	1
Saharanpore, North Division	0	7	6	1	14
Totals	378	442	707	839	2366

*No report received

A study of the statistics of Sati for the years 1815 to 1818 and of 1824 reveals the tenor of Satidaha in Varanasi. Presumably, most of the widows who became Sati belonged to various provincial communities residing within the City such as Rajasthani, Maharashtrian, Bengalee and others. They also belonged to different castes; Brahmin, *Kaistha, Benia, Bhatia, Agarwala, Kherwal, Khetree, Bhumihar, Kussera, Halwain* and others. But the overwhelming majority of Sati were Brahmins. This statistic becomes clear when out of 55 Satis, the numbers from the individual castes listed above varied from 1 to 3, while the number of Brahmin Satis totalled as many as 38. The age-groups of these Satis were as follows : Under 20-years-old, 4 widows; between 21 and 30, 4 widows; between 31 and 49, 12 widows; between 50 and 69, 26 widows; between 70 and 79, 8 widows; and between 80 and 85, 3 widows. The maximum legal age for becoming a Sati was 85, while the minimum age was set at 17.

This table also shows that widows belonging to the 50-69 age-group, whose husbands had passed away at a relatively old age, constituted the highest number of Satis. It would appear that they had led domestic lives for a considerable period, but with time, a householder's life alone held little attraction for them. Rather, they cherished a strong desire for a happy reunion with their deceased husbands in the hereafter. It is also remarkable that some mistresses were so attached to their deceased paramours that, even though they were not the legal wives, they too sought to become Sati. The scriptures did not sanction this, however, and they were turned away by rule of law. The Statement of Satis of 1824, which gives us comparatively detailed information, reveals that the majority of Sati had no children and that their financial condition was mediocre at best.

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The City witnessed both types of Satidaha, *anugamana* and *sahagamana*. In one extraordinary case in 1817, rather than die by flames, the widow attempted to drown herself in the Ganga, only to be rescued. There was only one case of a widow fleeing the pyre after it had been set alight, which was reported in 1818. The credit for saving many lives of widows definitely goes to Bird, the vigilant Magistrate of the City. His concern and action regarding the practice of Satidaha directly saved as many as 13 widows, including a few mistresses. They were all prevented from perishing by disallowing their appeals, dissuasion, or by denial on the grounds of scriptural injunctions and the orders of the *bewasthas* of the court pandits or other authorities. It is, however, important to note that the Magistrate did not report a single case of coercion to commit Satidaha by a widow's relatives.

The issue of Satidaha did not raise any hue and cry among the local people as it had in Calcutta, where there was heated and widespread public debate on the issue. Being the chief centre of Hindu religion and culture, the issue of Satidaha was referred from other places to Varanasi. Interestingly enough, both pro- and anti-Satidaha groups from Bengal found supporters here. While it is redundant to quote any opinion in favour of Satidaha, let us, for example, quote here the views of Swami Hariharananda, a scholar-monk of the City, against Satidaha. The Swami was a friend of Raja Rammohan Ray, a celebrated opponent of Satidaha. Hariharananda had been living in retirement in Varanasi when he sent the following letter denouncing Satidaha to the editor of the Indian Gazette on March 27, 1818. He writes :

> 'Without wishing to stand forward either as the advocate or opponent of the cremation of widows with bodies of their deceased husbands, but ranking myself among Brahmins who consider themselves bound by their births to obey the ordinances and maintain the correct observance of Hindoo law, I deem it proper to call the attention of the public to a point of great importance now at issue amongst the followers of that law and upon the determination of which the lives of thousands of the female sex depend.... I am at a loss to conceive how persons can reconcile themselves to the stigma of being accused of woman murder, without attempting to show the injustice of the charge, or if they find themselves to the reiteration of such a charge by further perseverance in similar conduct. I feel also both surprise and regret that European gentlemen, who boast of the humanity and morality of their religion, should conduct themselves towards persons who submit quietly to the imputation of murder, with the same politeness and kindness as they would show to the most respectable persons.'[64]

When Regulation XVII was passed on December 4, 1829, the custom

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of Satidaha was declared illegal and became a punishable offence. No report has surfaced about the reaction of the people of Varanasi to the absolute prohibition of this custom, but we do know this codification brought about an end to this ignominious practice in the City and elsewhere in India as well. Today only a few small Sati stones[65] (figures of Sati with their deceased husbands engraved on them) are scattered here and there to remind present day visitors of that dreadful custom.

Widow-remarriage

The widows referred to here were generally those child brides married to older men for reasons of social customs regarding the loss of caste should females not be married by a certain age. The tyranny of this custom was that in many cases young girls would reach womanhood only to discover that they had been both married and widowed and were now subject to many social restrictions.

The 'widow-remarriage' movement, initiated by Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, great educationist and humanist of Bengal, left hardly any impact in the City. On the contrary, it appears from the writings of Varanasi scholars, such as Manoratha Shastri's *Bidhavavivaha-Khandana* (printed by the Benares Buddhi Vilas Press in Samvat 1912) and Maniram's *Punarvivahakhandana* (published in the City, date unknown), that the local people were not in favour of widow-remarriage.[66]

CONDITION OF WOMEN

Women of the City can be classified into the following types: (1) Those belonging to orthodox families who observed the strictest purdah or seclusion; (2) those who were moderate with regard to purdah and enjoyed limited freedom; (3) working class women who observed no purdah; (4) widows who retired to the City to pass their last days; and (5) dancers and/or entertainers and mistresses who were outside the social fold.

Compared to their counterparts in Calcutta and other Indian cities, the average woman of Varanasi enjoyed greater freedom. The cosmopolitan and religious character of the City, with its abundance of temples and deities to be visited and the Ganga to take dips in, often cast a liberalizing effect on the Hindu women of Varanasi. The fear of kidnapping and other nefarious acts on women also diminished during the new regime of the British. The number of girls receiving a formal education was growing,

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though very slowly, with their admittance to the Jaynarayan School and other schools run by Christian missionaries. There were also a few famous female scholars of traditional learning, such as Hati Vidyalankar, who opened *tols* (Sanskrit academies), taught effectively, wrote books, and were received by the people with respect and honour equal to that of their male counterparts.*

Among such celebrated women, not only in the cultural history of Varanasi but also throughout India during the early modern period, there were Rani Bhavani of Bengal and Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore. There were also a few others in the City, who, though not rising to such great eminence, excelled in many respects. Among them were Panditain,** the wife of Bishwambhar Pandit, and Sitala Bahu, the widow of Dwarka Das and daughter-in-law of Gopal Das, the famous Nouputte banker of the City.

Sitala Bahu showed great skill when she became the sole proprietor of the family banking-house. After her husband passed away, she appointed her husband's brother, Babu Moti Chand, as manager. Some time after, however, she suspended him for misconduct and informed the Government of her action. When the Government empowered her to appoint another manager, she chose Sundar Das to be her *Gomasta*. When Sundar Das also proved to behave improperly, he too was removed, and she carried on the business herself thereafter. Before her death, she appointed Babu Madhu Sahu and Babu Sari Sahu, her daughter's children, as *Malik* and *Mukhteer* of her *kothi* (farm) and registered the farm papers accordingly.[67]

ACCOUNTS ON WOMEN FROM TRAVELLERS

Jayanarayan Ghoshal left an account of the early nineteenth century women of Varanasi that includes details of their daily lives and vivid descriptions of their dress, ornaments and cosmetics.[68]

Another Indian traveller, Bholanauth Chunder of Bengal, left the following romantic, yet, lively description of the women of the City in the mid nineteenth century :[69]

> 'The ghauts at Benaras are by far the most striking of all its architecture and ghauts of a Hindoo City are always its best lounges. There do the Hindoo females see the world out of their zenanas, cultivate friendship, acquire taste, pick up fashion, talk scandal, discuss the politics of petticoat government, learn the prices current of

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See Chapter XII.

See Chapter XVIII.

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eatables, and propose matches for their sons and daughters. Half their flirting and half their romancing go on at the ghauts. There have the young widows opportunity to exchange glances, to know that there are admirers of their obsolete beauties, and to enjoy the highest good humour they can harmlessly indulge in.

Being the headquarters of religion, the centre of wealth, the focus of fashion and the seat of polite society, Benaras is the great point of convergence to which is attracted the beauty of all Hindoostan. To have a peep at that beauty, the best opportunity is when the women sport themselves like merry Naiads in the waters of the Ganges.... The dress costume of the Khottanees (Hindusthani women) certainly kick the beam in their favour.'

Emma Roberts, a British woman, visited the City in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. She studied the characteristics and way of life of the women there making the following observations :[70]

'The seclusion so much affected by Asiatics in their domestic residences is completely attained by the mode of building represented in the plate (annexed in the book); where the walls are so high, and the towers so strong, the females may be indulged with something more than the few yards of sky to which the prospects of the greater portion of Hindustanee women of rank are limited. In some places, even the high terraces and elevated turrets, running along the exterior surface of the walls, are the exclusive monopoly of the men, who may be seen in an evening enjoying the dewy air in these pleasant places, while their wives and daughters are feign to be content with some narrow confined courtyard below. The love of flowers common to all the females of Hindostan, must be an instinct rather than a taste, many see them before they have been gathered.

They have no idea of water, except that which can be obtained from looking at it in a basin or jug;* and it is scarcely possible to imagine the gross state of ignorance (to which) the jealousy of man has doomed (the women). With some, the system works well; they are quite under the tyranny fancying, because it is only the lower order of their sex who are indulged with liberty, that to be enslaved is to enjoy dignity exclusive, and therefore, to be prized; others more lively and intelligent, are possessed with an insatiable curiosity to acquire information respecting things which they are not permitted to see; they are continually tormenting those about them with questions, puerile of course, since infants in European countries have better opportunities of obtaining knowledge; and for want of more noble employment for the mind, they are apt to become harsh and tyrannical, many being known to exercise the greatest cruelty over their dependants. That instances of barbarity, practised by women reduced to so degraded a state are not more frequent, is a strong argument in favour of the natural amiability of the sex in Hindoostan.

It is not easy, even for a European female, to obtain access to the best society of natives of her own sex; but when such opportunities have occurred, the observations made have been highly favourable to the intellectual endowment of a class who have to struggle with so many disadvantages. Though few can read, they all speak

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* This observation is, however, not true.

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correctly; and it is said that even the women-servants, who have been brought up in the *zenanas* belonging to persons of rank, express themselves in very superior language to those who are employed in attendance upon European ladies. The Hindoostan females are frequently very expert at the needle, although that kind of employment does not belong exclusively to women but to men also.'

Let it be also mentioned here that there was no lack of female offenders in the City.* The influx of unrestrained women in the City, including widows,[71] was conducive to crimes involving women.

WIDOWS

The most distressed category of women, nay, throughout the whole of the population of Varanasi, were the poor and elderly widows who gathered here in large numbers to pass the last days of their lives, waiting for the much-coveted 'liberation through death'. They had to depend solely on monies from their native towns and villages, if available at all, to meet the expenses of a bare existence and even this was in uncertain supply. To many it was not dignified to seek alms from an alms-house, thus, being cut off from their moorings and having few sources of income open to them, these widows suffered terribly. Their plight knew no bounds when they fell ill, there being none to look after them, and their miseries only came to an end in death.[72]

WOMEN AND THE SOCIO-RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE

Women were the very fabric of the Hindu socio-religious structure. Their deep faith, keen interest, active participation, and untiring service in all household, social and religious affairs, made them an essential part of nearly all private and public functions and ceremonies, including fairs and festivals. Remarkably, this unique role of women was hardly recognized, nor truly appreciated, by society as a whole. Moreover, chastity, regarded as the greatest ideal of womanhood in the East, and especially India, was upheld here.

SLAVERY

Slavery was not unknown in eighteenth and nineteenth century India. One case uncovered, which involves the widowed *Begum* of Nawab Samsuddaula, is detailed below.

At the flight of her slave women, the Begum of the late Nawab, who

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* For details, see Chapter XIX.

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had settled in the City, complained to W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General in Varanasi, that her slave women had cost her very large sums of money and she could not think of giving them up. Therefore, she would file a suit against them,[73] but to vouchsafe their security, she requested that they be kept under restraint pending the trial, pledging to provide for their maintenance. Otherwise, she feared, the slave women would abscond if left at large, rendering the proposed suit of no advantage whatsoever even should she succeed in obtaining a decree in her favour. When Brooke did everything in his power to induce the women-slaves to return to the *zenanah* of the Begum, they positively refused and declared that if any attempt was made to force them, they would destroy themselves.

Cases of slavery involved a regular gang in the City that engaged in stealing children and selling them into slavery as labourers or for other heinous purposes. This became evident when, in 1847, the gang was arrested and produced before the court. M. C. Omaney, Joint Magistrate of Varanasi, wrote to E. A. Reade, the Commissioner of 5 Division, on April 26, 1847, in this connection :[74]

> 'I have now before me a gang of persons who systematically ply this trade. The children are inveigled away by some old women hired for this purpose and passing through various hands find their way eventually to the Oudh territory and are sold as Rajpoot children of high extraction. All these cases now revealed are old standing but were never reported. There is reason to believe that the houses of the debauched *Sahebzadehs* (Muslim princes) of this City as well as Oudh are the reserving places of stolen children.'

Slavery was made illegal by the India Act V of 1843 and, finally, with the enactment of the Indian Penal Code of 1860, wherein the keeping or trafficking of slaves constituted a criminal offence.

THE CITY AS ARBITRATOR

Varanasi took a leading role in deciding social and legal matters referred to there from around the country and in handing down verdicts in the form of *vyavasthas*.

Being the educational and religious headquarters of India, where scholars of different branches of learning, including the *Dharmashastras*, lived in large number, the City occupied a special position among the cities of India. Various social issues were occasionally referred to the local pandits by both the Government and the common people from far and near, and in most cases, the verdicts of the Varanasi pandits were

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regarded as final. The chance of confusion and contradiction was, of course, possible, especially when the pandits held different opinions on a given issue. In such cases, the parties referring the cases had the freedom of choosing the verdict of their liking.

A good number of such verdicts has been collected by Subhadra Jha and published under the title *Dharmashastriya Vyavastha Samgraha*.[75] This collection shows the types of cases being referred to the City's pandits and their replies. We have previously referred one such verdict of the pandits with regard to caste and the crossing of the sea.

DAILY LIFE

We may form a general idea of the daily life of the citizens mainly from literary sources of historical value. Jayanarayan Ghoshal's *Kashi Parikrama* written in the early nineteenth century throws light on how people, especially monks and women, lived.[76]

We have two more informative accounts in this regard in Sanskrit found in *Girvana Padamanjari*, written by Varadaraja between 1600 and 1650 and *Girvana Vangmanjari*, written by Dhundhiraja between 1702 and 1704. Originally designed to teach Sanskrit, they also serve a historical purpose in giving a penned-picture of daily life, especially of the Brahmin householders of the City. These unique works are highly interesting for their dramatic style, as well as vivid descriptions of householder life greatly influenced by religion. Although these accounts were written a little earlier than our period of study, most of the same conditions continued to prevail and daily life continued in much the same manner till the end of the nineteenth century.[77]

In the following paragraphs are selected descriptions of a Brahmin householder's life taken from these texts :

> 'Brahmanas in Banaras got up early in the morning before day-break, recited hymns, eased themselves, washed their hands and feet with clay and water, cleansed teeth with a wooden brush, and then went to Manikarnika Ghat on the Ganges for morning bath, taking with them a watervessel (*jalapatram*—GPM, *agrodaka-patram*—GVM) possibly like a modern *jhari* (in Gujarati and Marathi) and an *arghya-patra* (GVM) or a *khadga-patra* (GPM) for offering water....
>
> Copper vessels of the shape of an *arghya-patra* are generally known as *khadga-patra*. The Brahmins also carried with them a *rudrakshamalika* (a rosary of berries of Elacocarpus Ganitrus), a ball of sacred ashes (*vibhuti-vatika*), *tilaka-sadhana* for making a *tilaka*-mark on the forehead, the box containing accessories for worship of gods (*devarchana-petika*), *kusha*-grass, an upper (*uttariya*) and a lower garment, sesamum seeds and coconut (*tila narikelam*) and sandal-wood.

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On the Manikarnika, the Banaras Brahmin takes his morning bath after reciting the *Mahaprayoga*, and performs his morning *sandhya* (obligatory prayers, according to prescribed rules) followed by Brahma-yajna and *nivapa-tarpana*. After this he worships the Lord with the *puja-dravyas* brought from home.

On *parva*-days, a Brahmana householder invites a sannyasin and some Brahmanas, including relatives, for dinner. After bathing, he goes to a *matha* or monastery to invite one sannyasin. There were many such monasteries in Banaras, and sannyasins from various provinces lived in one *matha*....

Sannyasins were approached with proper courtesy and requests were made to come for dinner. On the way they took care to avoid crowds for fear of touching people of certain castes. The host received the sannyasin with proper respect, washed their feet, gave them a big seat and special care was taken in giving them big plates while dining. After dinner the sannyasin was smeared with sandalwood paste fragrant with musk and camphor, was given cloves to chew, and was duly garlanded. The host then gave him some presents, e.g., costly garments and prostrated himself before the monk. The host also called all the members of the family to pay their respects to the monk.

The sannyasin, well fed and often over-eating, then inquired about the different members of the family coming to pay respects. He sometimes showed interest in the members of the family of the host householder, praised the qualities of the hostess. The intimacy and affection thus shown pleased the householder and enhanced his love and respect towards monks. Monks could advise the householder about the latter's family affairs and occasionally offered to help them or mildly rebuked them for their misdeeds as is done by the sannyasin in GVM when he plainly tells the host that the latter's action regarding the marriage of the younger daughter was not proper.

Brahmanas in Banaras generally stayed near the various ghats, the host in GPM stayed on the Bindu-Madhava-Ghatta near the shrine of Dugdha Vinayaka. There were rich Brahmanas who owned large buildings.... Such mansions had *salas* (lit. halls, here, possibly blocks) in four directions—east, north, west and south. There was the main *prasada* (centre building). Tenants (probably Brahmana families only) were housed in either the four *salas* or in the main building....

The Brahmana looses temper with his wife because of her delay in giving the *snana-samagri* and *puja-samagri* to her husband. The Brahmana, of an easily irritable temperament, also abuses his son and orders the latter to go to the bazaar (*apana*) and make certain purchases for the dinner to be given to some Brahmanas and a *Yati* on that *parva*-day.

Cash money was kept in the inner apartment (*antahpura* reserved for ladies) in a wooden-box (*daru-manjusha*) wherein was safely deposited a small gold-casket in which were preserved gold and silver coins....'

'THE SLEEPING LEVIATHAN' RISES

A study of the different facets of the lives of the local people, especially that of the Hindus during our period, reveals that local society had gradually come under Western influence. Society, which had been

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essentially mediaeval in nature, was now slowly transforming into a modern one after coming into contact with the West.

There must have been people who were painfully aware of some of the decadent aspects of traditional society, but were powerless and incapable of leading the populace into the New Age by modernizing some of the deep-rooted harmful customs stemming from the *Dharmashastras*. Even Muslim rulers, who were highly critical of some of the more questionable Hindu social customs, could not abolish them. The determined new rulers from the West, Christian missionaries and a new generation of Indians with Western educations, however, became instrumental in giving shock therapy, so to speak, to this chronic inertia and degeneration. As a result, 'the sleeping leviathan' began to stir from its age-old slumber, pulsating with new life.

Society continued to practise many traditional customs with regard to birth, marriage, death etc. At the same time, it had to respond and adjust to the spirit of the 'New Age' by abolishing customs like satidahas, polygamy, different types of torturous ordeals, and the rigidity of the caste system. This was done by spreading Western education among the people, including girls, in granting more freedom from the purdah system to women and in many other ways. During the transition to this new age, many changing social conventions, rules and regulations, which were now dealt with by codified laws administered by regular judicial courts, undermined the powers of the leadership of various social groups. Through Government encroachment, society was gradually losing control over its peoples. The concept of an individual identity was replacing that of a community or social identity.

Varanasi, unlike Calcutta, never became a hotbed of reform movements, but preferred to assume the role of arbitrator in debates over socio-religious reforms. However, it could not long remain altogether unaffected by the consequences of these movements and the reforms that followed. But the most significant characteristic of the society of the City during this period was that though it had to adjust itself in so many ways to the changing milieu of a new age, this predominately Hindu society was never cut adrift from its moorings, that is, its religion. It was these very moorings which, in turn, did not allow society to be swept away by the upsurge of Western civilization. Consequently, Hindu society evolved while keeping much of its typical identity and character intact.

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Though Hindu society underwent considerable transformation under the influences mentioned above, hardly any such transformation or assimilation occurred within the Muslim society. This large minority was intent on retaining its medieval character, age-old ideas, institutions and practices. Consequently, extreme conservation prevented Muslim society from deriving any benefit from modernization and it began to lag behind a modernizing Hindu society. The divide between these two social groups only widened, making any real rapport between them all the more difficult.

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APPENDIX

Account of Suttee during 1817

Name	Age	Caste	Husband's Name	Husband's Caste	Date of Burning	Police Juris-diction
Tarnee	40	Brahmin	Ramcaunt Thakooranie Chuckerbutty (Chakraborty)	Brahmin	7 Feb.	City
Dhunea	50	Coonlia	Futteh Singh	Coonlia	15 Feb.	City
Parbutty Baye	50	Brahmin	Ramacaunt Bhuttacharji (Bhattacharya)	Brahmin	11 Mar.	City
Ootim Baye	65	Brahmin	Umbaram	Brahmin	22 Mar.	City
Dordema Baye	70	Bunea	Casheeput	Bunea	8 July	City
Bishnu Baye	70	Brahmin	Gaunapat Bhut	Brahmin	1 Aug.	City
Naraine Baye	30	Brahmin	Bunkut Bhatt	Brahmin	18 Aug.	City
Jumma Baye	50	Brahmin	Sukhram	Brahmin	18 Sep.	City
Doma Baye	50	Brahmin	Luchmeedur	Brahmin	7 Sep.	City
Rooknee	60	Brahmin	Bishnooram Chukerbutty (Chakraborty)	Brahmin	18 Sep.	City
Sheokoonra	45	Halwaye	Madho	Halwaye	10 Oct.	City
Rajesury	80	Brahmin	Hurreeram Bhuttacharji	Brahmin	22 Oct.	City
Luchmee Baye	50	Brahmin	Shoebhut	Brahmin	18 Nov.	City
Aince	40	Gunga-pootra	Beychun	Gungapootra	20 Nov.	City
Sutbhama	60	Brahmin	Covind Bhatt Josee	Brahmin	5 Dec.	City

[*Parliamentary Papers*, published in 1821, pages 172-73.]

During the year of 1817, five Sati had been prevented, three under the *bewasthas* of the Pandits and one for not being the lawful wife, but the mistress of the deceased. The remaining was also prevented, not from burning but from drowning. The names of these women were Cublasee Bhoomharin, Raujkoour, Jumnee, Mullahin, Nunkee Khetranny, Soomuttee Khussea, and Heera Goshaine.

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Account of Suttee during 1818

Name	Age	Caste	Husband's Name	Husband's Caste	Date of Burning	Police Juris-diction
Bishnooa	40	Brahmin	Rammodhin	Brahmin	3 March	City
Lutchmi Baye	40	Brahmin	Naraine Bhutt	Brahmin	17 April	City
Rukheema Baye	60	Brahmin	Basdeo Bhatt	Brahmin	27 May	City
Balla Baye	60	Brahmin	Ballum Bhatt	Brahmin	31 May	City
Doorga	22	Khetranee	Busterram	Khetranee	31 May	City
Shookhee Dibbeea	40	Brahmin	Getulchand	Brahmin	8 July	City
Belasseea	20	Bhaten	Khoshaleedin	Bhaten	12 July	City
Cashee Bye	40	Bhrahmin	Unnajee Josee	Brahmin	18 July	City
Jugto	40	Brahmin	Buckhtawur	Brahmin	31 July	City
Soo jooawur	85	Brahmin	Sreepat Chowbay	Brahmin	10 Aug.	City
Rama Bye	60	Brahmin	(Suraj Kumar)	Brahmin	14 Aug.	City
Ranka Bye	80	Bania	Shoobha	Bania	16 Aug.	City
Doma Bye	50	Brahmin	Suswant Roy	Brahmin	8 Oct.	City
Hurmoni		Bhooharin	Shukt Singh	Bhooharin	14 Dec.	City

[*Parliamentary Papers*, published in 1821, pages 206-07.]

During the year 1818, three Sati were prevented under *bewastha* of the Pandits, although through persuasion only. The names of these women were Suhujah, a Brahmin; Cutwaroo, a Ramzanee, and Rughoobunshee, a Sonarin. Besides these three, a woman named Danoo, a Brahmin by caste, ran away from the pile after it was set alight, and thus survived.

Account of Suttee during 1824

1) Seeramonee - 45 - Brahmin - Indurmun (Indramohun) Brahmin grainseller (in middling circumstances) - 1 January 1824 - Thannah Ramapoora. Seeramonee left no children.

2) Parwuttee Bae - 55 - Brahmin - Cashepershaud - Brahmin (service in middling circumstances) - 19 February 1824 - Thannah Dussussmedh: The *Sahamaran* took place in presence of the police officers, there being no legal impediment. Parwuttee left no children.

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3) Gopeeka Bace - 32 - Brahmin - Kishen Bhatt - Brahmin (beggar; middling circumstances), 3 March 1824. Thannah Calbhyro: The Sahamaran took place in presence of the police officers, there being no legal impediment. Gopeeka left no children.

4) Goureeconwur, alias Thakooranee Bahoo - 24 - Nagur - Balakeeram - Nagar (service in middling circumstances) - 27 April 1824. Thannah Calbhyro: The Sahamaran took place in the presence of police officers, there being no legal impediment. Goureeconwur left no children.

5) Radhamunee - 60 - Brahmin - Cangadhur Mookerjea - Brahmin - 1 May 1824 -Thannah Ausangunge: The Sahamaran took place in presence of the police officers, there being no legal impediments. Radhamunee left a son aged 39 years.

6) Oomra - 40 - Brahmin - Rarnnarain - Brahmin (landholder in middling circumstances), 1 June 1824 - Thannah Dussussmeyd: The Sahamaran took place in the presence of police officers, there being no legal impediments. Oomra left no children.

7) Rookmin - 60 - Brahmin (Marhatta) - Rampunth - Brahmin (Marhatta) - beggar in middling circumstances - 2 June 1824 - Thannah Calbhyro: The Sahamaran took place in presence of the police officers, there being no legal impediments. Rookmin left a son and a daughter.

[*Parliamentary Papers* 7, printed in 1827, page 59.]

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    कहां गये मेरे होली को खेंलैया।
    सिपाही रुस्तम अली बाँको सिपहिया ॥

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CHAPTER VI

RELIGION

HINDU REVIVALISM

Varanasi represents a vast religious complex where devotees and places of worship of almost all the major religions of the world are found, and among all these religions, Hinduism, for obvious reasons, has occupied the central position.

During the Middle Ages, many Hindu temples in cities of pilgrimage, such as Varanasi, were demolished by Muslim zealots. Worship in any form was despised by most Muslim rulers who also opposed temple building. The situation changed at the beginning of the eighteenth century with the downfall of the Mughal Emperors and the rise of the Marathas, and later, the advent of the British.

The Marathas were orthodox Hindus and had great love and reverence for the holy city of Varanasi and poured in wealth for renovating old temples, erecting new ones, installing idols, constructing ghats, and feeding and giving donations to the Brahmins. Their attachment to and concern for Varanasi was best revealed when Mahadaji Sindhia, the powerful Maratha chief, proposed (though without any effect) to the British Government that it should hand over Varanasi to him. Bengalees joined with the Marathas later in the second half of the eighteenth century in embellishing the City. The fact that Marathas and Bengalees took a leading role in erecting temples and installing deities in Varanasi is evident from the records since the Government specified fees 'upon placing the figure or symbol of any Hindu Divinity on a new Temple' by Marathas and Bengalees at Rupees 1 Annas 4 in 1780.[1]

IDENTIFICATION AND RESTORATION OF HOLY SITES

In the revival of Hinduism in Varanasi in the Modern Age, the endeavours of these enthusiastic devotees were not only confined to temple construction but also to the restoration of lost and obscure *tirthas*, lost and obscure mainly due to the recurrent destruction of temples and idols

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mentioned earlier. They were responsible for the installation of deities at sites mentioned in the Puranas and for the revival of their forgotten glories. Around the third quarter of the eighteenth century, Ramchandra Vidyalankar, a Bengalee pandit, and his son, Umashankar Tarkalankar, scoured nearly every nook and cranny of Varanasi, went through many old books, and finally discovered many tirthas which had been lost or long forgotten. They also wrote a directory as a guide for pilgrims entitled, *Kashiyatrapaddhati*, in which they recorded the locations and other details of holy sites. Almost a hundred years after them, Gorji Dikshit, a Gujarati pandit, also rendered great service in the restoration of holy sites in Varanasi. Reverend Sherring gave the following testimony regarding Gorji's initiative :

> 'Gorji is a remarkable man, and has done more to revive Hinduism, in the City of late years, than perhaps any other person. Having diligently read the *Kashi Khandam*, he has searched about for the temples and idols referred to in that book, and wherever he has found old temples in decay and abandoned, or has discovered sacred sites now neglected and generally unknown, he has endeavoured to restore them to honour and popularity. One favourite method which he adopts is to inscribe an extract from the *Kashi Khandam*, respecting a particular forsaken temple, or site, on stone and to set it up there, for the enlightenment of passers by. In some cases, he merely writes the extract on a wall or other suitable place.'[2]

TEMPLES MULTIPLIED

Though it is true that temples multiplied at a 'prodigious rate' in the nineteenth century, the actual number cannot be accurately ascertained. The first available census of the City, taken in the beginning of the nineteenth century, estimated the number of temples at one thousand. Almost three decades later, Prinsep's census would record the same number. If it is taken for granted that Prinsep's census was more accurate, then it becomes obvious that the first census must have recorded an exaggerated number of temples. According to still another count made in the 1860s, the number of temples was approximately 1454, which was also in conformity with the report of a growing number of temples of the City.[3] This increase was also substantiated by numerous other sources, including travel literature and the press, which recorded the continuous construction of temples in Varanasi during the period under review.

Upon enquiry about a given deity or temple, one often gets vague, contradictory or even fictitious answers from traditional guides, attending priests and local people. Again, if the same deity had more than one site in

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course of time, which some had, one is inevitably confronted with the problem of which the original site was. The locations of original sites recorded in different Puranas sometimes varied too. For example, the *Kashi Khandam* of the *Skanda Puranam* did not always agree with the site and number of deities of the *Linga Puranam*. Moreover, that some deities had to be moved from their original sites to protect them from iconoclastic attacks is a well-known fact. Besides these, there could be other reasons behind a shift from an old site or of a deity's having more than one site, which are not known to us.

Considering all these factors, one comes to realize how difficult or impossible it is to accurately locate the exact site of a given deity. Attempts at locating holy sites only on the basis of the Puranas, especially the *Kashi Khandam* and *Linga Puranam*, as have been made at different times, seem to be an over simplified solution to the problem and might lead one to wrong conclusions unless other sources and factors are also taken into consideration. Hence a comparative study of the names of *mahallas*, bazars, tanks, ghats, and streets—all of which in many cases were named after deities, and other historical data, may contribute to a more comprehensive identification of holy sites, deities, *kundas*, etc.

Inquiries hitherto made by professional as well as amateur researchers in this respect have not, of course, gone in vain, though at times searches for the original site of a given deity may end in a jungle of confusion. Nevertheless, whatever success has been achieved in this respect has undoubtedly helped to give us a fair idea about these holy sites and help in reconstructing the religious history of the City.

LOCATION OF HOLY SITES

With regard to location of deities, kundas, etc., during this period, we shall follow the directory of holy sites by Gorji entitled *Kashiyatraprakasha*. After a thorough study over a considerable period of time, Gorji published the results of his research in 1883. Many thanks are due to Gorji, but for whose untiring zeal and enterprise the identification of so many sites would have been made all the more difficult. Nevertheless, not all of Gorji's findings have been universally accepted. A list showing the locations of such sites according to Gorji has been placed in the Appendix.

PILGRIMS AND THE SACRED *YATRAS*

Pilgrims formed a vital part of the Hindu religious complex of the City.

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Holding a special position among all the sacred tirthas of the Hindus, pilgrims would pour into Varanasi from all corners of India and from Nepal, Burma and Tibet as well.[4] The two main purposes of pilgrimage to Varanasi were to pay homage to Vishwanatha and Annapurna, the presiding deities of Varanasi, and to bathe in the Ganga, which is believed to have the mystic power of washing away all one's sins and of granting purity and serenity. Pilgrims coming by land had to pay duties to the Government.[5] For example, Bengalee pilgrims were to pay nine pice per head.[6] The total amount thus collected from pilgrims was Rs. 817.13 in 1788.[7] While it was the usual practice of pilgrims to resort to the houses of *pandas*, separate houses were also available for rent.[8] Besides these, monasteries of different religious sects also provided shelter to their respective devotees.[9] *Dharmashalas*, or religious resthouses, some of which were housed in very large buildings, also accommodated pilgrims. These dharmashalas had first been built by pious chiefs like Rani Bhavani of Bengal[10] and Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore,[11] later, other Indian princes, *zamindars* and people of wealth followed suit.

Among the many pilgrimages undertaken in Varanasi, the *Antargrihayatra* was most important.[12] The Antargrihayatra consisted in the circumambulation of the Omkareshwara quarter in the north, the Vishwanatha quarter in the middle and the Kedareshwara quarter in the south of the City. While pilgrimage to Omkareshwara was not common, possibly due to the surrounding area being populated by Muslims, pilgrimage to the Vishwanatha quarter was very common.[13] Besides the Antargrihayatra, enthusiastic pilgrims would undertake other special pilgrimages which bestowed great credit upon them. Most remarkable among these were the *Panchakroshiyatra* (circumambulation of the entire holy City) and the *Panchatirthayatra* (visits to the five sacred tirthas over the Ganga.)

The Panchakroshiyatra, a tiresome and time-consuming journey, was considered to be particularly sacred and meritorious. Not only pilgrims from outside Varanasi, but local people as well undertook the Panchakroshiyatra twice a year.[14] In 1786, the length of the Panchakroshi Road was reported to have extended roughly forty miles, which could be covered on foot in five days.[15] But according to Reverend Sherring, the length of the Panchakroshi Road was closer to fifty miles and actually took six days on foot. Jadunath Sarvadhikari, a Bengalee pilgrim completed his Panchakroshiyatra in 1857 in nine days.[16] Much later, it was found that the

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length of the Panchakroshi from its starting point at Manikarnika Ghat and back was indeed forty miles.[17] Variations in the time required to complete this pilgrimage must have been due to differences in pace and time spent for resting.

Each and every animate and inanimate object lying within the area bounded by the Ganga on the east and Panchakroshi Road on the other three sides of the City was considered holy. The road, shaded by a double row of massive trees almost from beginning to end, had been repaired by Rani Bhavani perhaps in the 1760s.[18] Repairs were again undertaken by order of Warren Hastings in the latter half of 1784.[19] Since the Yatra was such an important Varanasi pilgrimage, a graphic description by Reverend Sherring is quoted here :

> 'It is customary for a large number of pilgrims to travel together on this journey. Before setting out each morning, they must bathe in a tank or stream, and, on terminating their march each day, must perform the same rite. They do not permit themselves the luxury of shoes, nor do they relieve the fatigue of the journey by the assistance of either horse, or ass, or camel or elephant, or of any carriage, or cart, or vehicle whatever. Anxious to secure a full measure of merit, they cannot afford that it should be lessened by the appliances and arts of civilised life. All, therefore, men, women and children, rich and poor, princes and peasants, travel on foot. The exception to this stringent rule is in the case of the sick and infirm.
>
> On the way, the pilgrims must not eat pawn, (betel leaf) of which all natives are passionately fond, and take great care that the Benares side of the road is not defiled. They must not quarrel, or give one another bad language, must not receive any present.... Starting from the Manikarnika Ghat, the pilgrim keeps along the banks of the Ganges until he arrives at the Asi Sangam and Asi Ghat.... From this spot he proceeds to a temple of Jagannath close by and thence on to the village of Kandhawa, where he stays the remainder of the day. The second day's march is to the village of Dhup Chandi, where he worships the tutelary goddess of that name. On the third day he arrives at Rameswar, after a long walk. The fourth day brings to him to Sivapur, where he visits the famous shrine of the Panch Pandava....
>
> On the fifth day, he pays visit to the village of Kapildhara, where he worships the god Mahadeva. The sixth and last stage is from Kapildhara to the Barna Sangam, and thence to Manikarnika Ghat, from which he first set out.... All the way from Kapildhara to Manikarnika Ghat, the pilgrim scatters on the ground grains of barley, which he carries in a bag made for the purpose. This curious custom is in honour of Siva. On reaching the Ghat, he bathes in the rivers, makes his offering of money to the priests in attendance, and then goes to the temple of Sakhi-Vinayak, or the witness-bearing Ganesh, in order that the fact of his pilgrimage may be duly attested by that deity, and thence to his home.'[20]

The Panchatirthayatra pilgrimage would start from Asi Ghat or Asi Sangam. Having performed proper religious rites at this ghat the pilgrim

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proceeded to Dashashwamedh Ghat where he would worship the deities in the temple, after which he went on to Manikarnika Ghat where he would bathe in the well there. From there he went to Panchaganga Ghat and then on to Varuna Sangam where he ended his sacred journey. At both of these last two places he would make customary offerings and pay a respectful visit to the deities installed there. Thus pilgrims would walk through every ghat from the southern extreme to the northern extreme of the City during the Panchatirthayatra.

Pilgrims would also visit Vyasakashi, i.e.,Ramnagar, on pilgrimage during their stay in the City. Having completed their pilgrimage to Varanasi, many returned home, while others proceeded on to other pilgrim centres of the country.

DEITIES AND THEIR TEMPLES

Among the many deities worshipped in Varanasi, some have their own temples in which they are enshrined. According to one survey dated 1860, these temples were distributed throughout the mahallas as follows : Kotwali—261, Kal Bhairo—216, Adampura—48, Jaitpura—30, Chetganj—53, Bhelupura—154 and Dashashwamedh—692.[21] Most of these temples still stand and pilgrims continue to pay homage to these deities to this day. The descriptions of these temples, taken from written accounts during the period under review, are presented below by category.

TEMPLES OF SHIVA

Vishwanatha or Vishweshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of the Universe, the presiding deity of Varanasi) : Vishwanatha, another name for Shiva, is one of the twelve *Jyotirlingas* spread all across India and holds, according to the Puranic tradition and popular belief, the position of suzerain over all other divine entities and human beings living within the Panchakroshi boundary of Varanasi. His chief assistant, through whom he acts, is Bhaironath, the *Kotwal*, or god-magistrate, of the Panchakroshi area. Important matters are believed to be brought before the Lord by Bhaironath, whose god-agents are stationed all along the Pachakroshi Road where they act as *chaukidars* or watchmen.[22a] Accordingly, this temple has occupied a unique position among all the temples of the City. It is regarded as the principal shrine of Shiva, Lord of Varanasi, and, accordingly, was visited and worshipped by the largest number of devotees and pilgrims. The image, installed by Narayan Bhatta at the bidding of

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Todarmal during the reign of Akbar, the great Mughal Emperor, had been thrown into the nearby Jnanavapi on the eve of an iconoclastic attack on the temple. Hence, devotees would pour water and the like into the well as offerings to the Lord until Ahalya Bai reportedly installed a new idol of Shiva, brought from the Narmada River, in the present temple she built for it in 1777.

Contrary to the story of this installation by Ahalya Bai, it has been claimed that the pandas recovered the old idol of Vishwanatha from the Jnanavapi shortly after the iconoclastic storm of 1669. A cut mark found at the top of the lingam, which could have been caused when the idol was tossed into the Jnanavapi, also suggests this possibility. After the recovery, the idol was finally installed in an inconspicuous corner to the south of the Jnanavapi and was worshipped without ostentation till the date of the construction of Ahalya Bai's temple. In support of this claim, information about some royal personages visiting the City and worshipping Vishwanatha between 1672 and 1765 has been furnished from pilgrim record books preserved by the pandas, the traditional priests of Vishwanatha. For example, we may find records for the following : Maharaja Bhava Singh of Rewah came to the City and worshipped Vishwanatha in 1672; Maharaja Jagat Singh of Udaipur came in 1677; Maharaja Aniruddha Singh of Rewah in 1695, Maharaja Sangram Singh of Udaipur in 1749 and Maharaja Asi Singh, of the same state, was here in 1765. Finally, Maharaja Jawan Singh of Udaipur installed a Shivalinga under the name of Jawaneshwara near Vishwanatha in 1734.[22b]

The above data lead us to believe that the continuity of the worship of Vishwanatha did not break during the intervening period. It is also likely that Ahalya Bai did not install a new idol of Shiva, but only re-consecrated the old one. An inscription on the Vishwanatha Temple informs only the date of construction of the temple and not that of the installation of the idol. Any question regarding the antiquity of the deity, however, did not appear to bother the common devotees much, because as soon as Ahalya Bai's temple to Vishwanatha was completed, devotees started pouring into the temple to pay homage—taking it as the genuine seat of Vishwanatha.

According to one source, the construction of this temple cost about three lakhs of rupees and the construction work was supervised by Jayram Sharma, the priest of Ahalya Bai.[22c] It was formally consecrated on *Janmashtami* (Sri Krishna's birthday) of *Bhadrapada*, Monday, 25th

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August, 1777 A.D.[22d] It was recorded that Pandit Narayan Dikshit presided over the consecration ceremony.[22e]

There is another vital issue that needs discussion here. In addition to Vishwanatha, there were at least seventeen deities of distinct names that were separately worshipped within the court of the temple. They were : (1) Dandapanishwara, (2) Avimukteshwara, (3) Sri Madhava and Lakshmi (Vaikuntheshwara), (4) Parvati (Maheshwari), (5) Ananda Bhairava (Mahakaleshwara), (6) Bhoga Annapurna (Shringara Gauri), (7) Satyanarayana (Vishnu), (8) Shanishchareshwara (9) Nikumbheshwara, (10) Kapileshwara, (11) Ganapati (Vinayaka), (12) Virupakshi (Virupakshi Gauri), (13) Virupaksha, (14) Vyaseshwara, (15) Kuvereshwara, (16) Vijayalinga, and (17) Avimukta Vinayaka.[22f] Having this information, the following questions arise: Who installed all these deities? Could these too have indeed been installed by Ahalya Bai?

If the lists of deities installed in the court of Vishwanatha at different times since the foundation of the temple are compared, it becomes evident that some idols were installed much later than the period of Ahalya Bai. But when and by whom these remaining deities were installed is not definitely known to us. Jayanarayan Ghoshal, who came to the City and had been living here shortly after the construction of this temple, recorded that in addition to the idol of Vishwanatha in the east, there were idols of Dandapanishwara in the west, Avimukteshwara in the southeast, Sri Madhava (Vishnu) with Lakshmi in the southwest, Parvati in the northwest and Ananda Bhairava in the northeast of the temple. It is quite likely that at least these five deities were there from the date of the completion of the temple. But whether these deities had also previously existed there or were newly installed by Ahalya Bai is not known. It is, however, almost definite that excepting these five deities, the remaining deities of the court of Vishwanatha were installed later on.

As for the architecture of the temple, it is made of stone and situated in a quadrangle covered with a roof, above which the tower of the temple can be seen. When observed from a distance, from the elevations of the roof, the building presents three distinct divisions. The first is the spire of the temple of Dandapanishwara Shiva, whose base is in the quadrangle below. The second is a large gilded dome, and the third is the gilded tower of the temple of Vishwanatha Shiva itself. These three objects are all in a row at the centre of the quadrangle[22g]: One golden vessel (*swarna kalasa*) was placed over the tower of the temple.[22h] The tower, dome and spire each

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terminate in a sharp point. Attached to the first there is a high pole bearing a small flag tipped with a trident. The temple, including the tower, is fifty-one feet in height and has beautiful carvings of varied designs.[22i]

Outside the enclosure to the north there was a large collection of deities raised upon a platform and referred to by the people as 'the court of Mahadeva'. Several small images were built in the same way within the wall flanking this court. By order of Warren Hastings, Ali Ibrahim Khan, the Magistrate of the City, constructed the *naubatkhana* from where the *shehnai* was played with other accompaniments near the temple in the 1880s.[22j] There was also a *ghaḍikhana* (meaning a clock room) attached to the temple from where the hours were struck.[22k] The king of Nepal presented a large bell of elegant workmanship which was suspended in the belfry.

In 1839,[221] Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore covered the tower and dome with gold leaf which was spread over plates of copper overlaying the stone beneath. Thus when the sun reflected on the tower and dome they looked like 'vast masses of burnished gold'.[22m] It was rumoured that twenty-two and a half *maunds* of gold were used for this gilding.[22n] Owing to all this gold-plating, Vishwanatha Temple is popularly known as the 'Golden Temple.'

About the daily worship of Vishwanatha, one account is as follows[22o]: The deity used to be washed every morning and evening with water from the Ganga. The inner views of the temple were of great solemnity in the evenings when special services were held. The altar was then brilliantly illuminated; the emblem was richly adorned with garlands of flowers; aromatics were burnt to diffuse the fragrance of incense; various instruments were played, striking up an agreeable concert; hymns, chanted from the Vedas, rose in sonorous accent; the chrous was swelled by the worshippers, and time was kept by the beat of their palms. Dancing and singing then followed in routine. The God was next served with his supper. Then He had His *bhang*, His betel and His *chillum*. Finally, He was put to bed, wrapped up in a shawl in winter and a brocade in summer.

Other details of the worship, though from a comparatively recent period of the early twentieth century, are given below.[22p] *Trikala Puja*, or three-time worship, of the deity would be done daily at 12 noon and at seven and nine at night. These first and third pujas were conducted by the priests. At about ten in the morning, one could see a number of servants starting from their residences in Agastya Kunda Mahalla for the temple

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carrying silver vessels and two pots full of cowmilk. The leader of the party would carry a silver burning brazier of incense while repeating, 'Shiva Shambho Mahadev'. The whole temple was washed and cleaned at about 11 a.m., followed by the commencement of mid-day *abhisheka* to the accompaniment of South Indian instrumental music. The same formalities would be observed during the third puja at night. The *mahant* himself would take part in the *aratrikam* of the deity, both at noon and at night.

The second puja, which was held at about 7 p.m., was performed by the pandits of different mahallas along with the singing of the *sama gana* in chorus with *damaru*; this puja was called *Sapta Rishi Puja*.

Annakoot, the special offering of rice, etc., to the Lord, was held annually on the *Dipavali* festival day and continued for the subsequent two days. The temple would be crowded with devotees for the greater part of the day, when not only the devotees residing in the City, but also pilgrims from near and far, were seen pressing into the temple.[22q]

The worshippers would carry offerings consisting of sugar, rice, ghee, grain, flowers, water, etc, for the Lord. The lotus was thought to be one of the most beautiful flowers to offer. Over the narrow doorway, the chief entrance to the temple, there was a small figure of Ganesha upon which some sprinkled a few drops of Ganga water. The worshipper would pay homage to other deities existing within the enclosure, but it was his positive duty to show special respect to the Lord. He would make his obeisance to Him either by bowing his head or by prostrating himself upon the ground, while respectfully offering his gifts and ringing one of the bells suspended from above.[22r] The continuous humming of 'Ram' 'Ram' 'Ram' filled the air of the temple.[22s] Fat, tame bulls, which had free accesses to the enclosure and were sometimes on the lookout for sweetmeats and the like, could not be ignored.[22t]

A record of 1932[22u] tells us that *brahmacharins*, sannyasins and *vidyarthis* (learners) were fed with the *bhoga* (food offered to the Lord) every day. With donations received as *dakshina*, the mahant maintained a Vedic *pathashala* in which students were taught the *Rik*, *Yajur* and *Sama* Vedas with free board and lodging.

One can see even today a tablet set on the side of the entrance gate prohibiting the entry of persons not belonging to the Sanatana Hindu Dharma. It is not known when this was affixed, but the purpose of such a restrictive notice is obvious. Though this rule was generally followed, there was no lack of examples when this rule was relaxed and persons

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belonging to other religions, even those having contempt for Hinduism were allowed inside the temple. While F. F. Wyman,[22v] the author of a travelogue entitled '*Calcutta to the Snowy Range*' was held back at the entrance gate, both Bishop Heber[22w] and Rev. Sherring[22x] were allowed inside and shown minute details of the interior. Of course, those who are really interested, but not permitted access, can get a glimpse of the deity from the balcony of the naubatkhana from where a clear view is possible. More information about Vishwanatha Temple and the worship of the deity is known from the temple rules placed in the Appendix.[22y]

Adi Vishweshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of the universe) : This temple, fifty feet high and situated about one hundred and fifty feet northwest of Jnanavapi Mosque, was surmounted by a large dome that was in a state of decay. The lower part of the temple was paved with slabs of stone as far as the base of the dome. The whole temple was extensively repaired around 1850 by one Gunput, a neighbouring tobacconist, who embellished its interior with paintings traced on the walls.[23a] Sherring found nothing of an ancient character in this temple and he recorded that communication was open between the enclosure of Adi Vishweshwara and the courtyard of Jnanavapi Mosque, this was closed off later on.[23b]

Omkareshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of Omkara, the holy syllable) : The temple, situated in the Muslim neighbourhood of Adampura and now surrounded by a cemetery, was constructed by Rani Bhavani of Bengal around the middle of the eighteenth century. The original temple had been devastated by Muslims.[24]

Kedareshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of Kedara) : This temple was, and continues to be, one of the most frequented in the City. Situated in the Bengali Tola Mahalla, it is a large building rising from the bank of the Ganga from which a fine stone ghat descends to the bed of the river. It stands at the centre of a spacious court of which the four corners are four domed temples. It is believed to have been spiritually connected with the celebrated Kedarnatha Temple in the Himalayas. Other deities associated with the principal deity are Lakshminarayana, Bhaironath, Ganesha and Annapurna. The ghat, named after the deity, descends from the eastern wall of the temple and upon the staircase there are several small shrines, at its base there is a well. This temple remains one of the largest temples of the City. The Kedara Temple was under the management of Kumar Swami Math of South India and the income from its many

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houses and gardens was appropriated for the deity and the temple.[25]

Tilabhandeshwara Temple (The idol of Shiva which is believed to increase in size to the extent of one *sesamum* seed each day) : This temple, situated in the mahalla named after it, continues to be frequented by large numbers of devotees. The idol, like that of Jageshwara in the Ausanganj Mahalla, is a huge stone, fifteen feet round and four and half feet high. There are numerous niches in the wall where a good number of idols were installed. Among them there was one beautiful image of Shiva, complete with head, hands and feet. It was black in colour and large. This type of image was rarely seen in the City, where the worship of Shiva in the form of a lingam was more common.[26a] There was also one mutilated statue of Birbhadra, the famous attendant of Shiva, in the temple. This statue was symmetrically built and its limbs were beautifully chiselled.[26b]

Trilochana Temple (Shiva, the three-eyed Lord) : Also a much-frequented temple, the deity was and continues to be held in high-esteem by devotees. Damaged by Muslims, it remained in ruins for a long time until Nathubala of Puna constructed a new temple around 1860. The porch of the temple was painted red and rested on eight pillars, four in the front and four attached to the wall behind. The roof was decorated with pictures and on the floor there was a bull in white marble. The interior of the temple was simple. A brass cistern was built into the floor and in the middle an emblem of Shiva lies, which is called Lingeshwara. Near the lingam is Parvati, Shiva's wife. A mahalla[27a] and a ghat[27b] were named after the deity.

Adi Mahadeva Temple (Shiva, the great God) : This temple, situated near Trilochan Ghat was unadorned and plain. There was a chair in the porch area meant for a *vyasa*, a public reader of the sacred books. In front of the porch, to the east, there was a peepul tree with a platform attached to its base upon which there was a small shrine with a collection of idols.

Vireshwara Temple (Shiva, the heroic Lord) : The original site of this temple, according to the *Kashi Khandam*, was Swarlineshwara, near the Raj Ghat. The present temple was most likely re-consecrated at its present site as early as 1650, because a ghat, called Vireshwar, which must have been named after this deity, was mentioned by Varadaraj in his *Girvanapadamanjari*, written sometime between 1600 and 1650.[28a] The adjacent mahalla was also named after the deity.[28b]

Vaidyanatha[29a] Temple (Shiva, the Lord of healing) : The present

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site of the temple is in Kodai ki Chouki Mahalla[29b] in Dashashwamedh. It perhaps existed in the same place in the nineteenth century. This temple was and continues to be visited by large numbers of worshippers during *Shivaratri*.[29c] The 1796 list of mahallas shows that there was a Vaidyanath Mahalla in this locality, which must have been named after this deity.[29d]

Vriddhakaleshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, dedicated by a king named Vriddhakala)[30a]: Situated in the northern side of the City,[30b] this temple was old and covered an extensive area when visited by Rev. Sherring. Of the temple's twelve courts, five were used as dwelling houses, while Sherring reported that the other seven courts were falling into rapid decay.

The shrine of the deity was divided into two parts, in one of which was the seat of Vriddhakaleshwara. He was sitting in a cistern and over his head a vessel hung containing water which dropped through a hole upon the deity continuously. Within the enclosure there was one quadrangle in which there was a dharmashala for pilgrims and two wells.[30c] One was shallow, into which the ailing and those who wished to have a long life would plunge. In conjunction with washing in this well, one was also required to drink water from the second well, which was reported to be tasteful.[30d] A mahalla was also named after this deity.[30e]

Kardameshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Kardama) : This temple, situated in Khandhwa, was reported to have been very old.[31]

Brahmeshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Brahma)[32a]: Jayanarayan Ghoshal referred to the Brahma Ghat as having been named after the deity installed near the ghat.[32b] The deity was fairly old and was reported to date back to the thirteenth century.[32c] A Brahma temple also probably existed there in the nineteenth century.

Krittivaseshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, wearing a skin)[33a] : A short distance from the original site of the temple, a mosque was built in 1659, and near the Ratneshwara Temple, a small temple was built in the last century by Raja Patni Mall. The deity was re-consecrated therein.[33b]

Kameshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, who fulfils desires) : This temple was comparatively old and housed a good number of shrines and images. While the principal temple was dedicated to the deity of Kameshwara, it contained a dozen other images as well. Kameshwara Temple once had a connection with Matsyodari Tirtha, but since the water of the tank was

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drained and covered up for reasons of sanitation, the number of pilgrims coming to visit the temple and bathe in the Tirtha was reported to have sharply diminished.[34a] A mahalla was named after the deity.[34b]

Kshemeshwara Temple (Shiva as the Lord of security and happiness) : The Kshemeshwar Ghat was mentioned by Jayanarayan Ghoshal in his *Kashi Parikrama*, written around 1800.[35] The temple of this deity most probably existed near the Kedar Temple.

Madhyameshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of Centre)[36a] : Both the temple of the deity and a mahalla named after the deity[36b] exist today. This temple most probably existed in the nineteenth century.

Yameshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, dedicated by Yama, the god of death)[37a] : The temple of the deity, after which a ghat's name is found in an early nineteenth century record[37b], exists today[37c] and probably also existed in the nineteenth century.

Rameshwara[38a] Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Rama) : It was situated on the Ram Ghat, where an image of Rama was also installed.[38b]

Manaseshwara or Maneshwara Temple (Shiva, Lord of Manas, the lake)[39] : It was situated near the Manasarobar Ghat.

Someshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, dedicated by the god of Soma, the Moon)[40a] : It was situated to the side of Dalbheshwara Temple near Man Mandir Ghat. Devotees used to worship the deity and visit the temple in the expectation of healing diseases.[40b]

Ratneshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, emerged from the jewels left by Giriraj Himalaya, his father-in-law)[41a] :

The temple, a small one, is situated near Vriddhakala Temple. Rev. Sherring recorded a 'curious circumstance' connected with this temple, which had taken place around 1830. An English Magistrate of the City who was undertaking improvement work decided to level this temple, when one night he dreamt of Shiva who warned him not to do so. The Magistrate took the dream seriously and consequently gave up the idea of demolishing the temple.[41b]

Ghantakarneshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Ghantakarna, an attendant of Shiva)[42] : This temple stands by the side of Ghantakarna Talao.

Tarakeshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, the saviour)[43] : This temple, near

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Manikarnika Ghat, was constructed by Rani Ahalya Bai in 1849. The idol is lying in a kind of cistern. During the rainy season, this temple became submerged in the swollen Ganga. The original site of the Tarakeshwara Temple was near Jnanavapi.

Dashashwamedheshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, dedicated by Brahma on the site of the ten horse sacrifices) : This temple is situated near the Dashashwamedh Ghat. The image is a plain black stone of enormous dimensions in front of which there is a huge bull.[44]

Divodaseshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Divodasa, the King of Varanasi) : Located in a court near Mir Ghat, there are other deities as well, one of which is Vishavahuka, or the Twenty-Handed Divinity.[45]

Daksheshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by King Daksha, the father-in-law of Shiva) : This temple is situated in a small enclosure near the site of Vriddhakala.[46]

Dalabhyeshwara or Dalbheshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by the god of clouds) : This temple is situated near Someshwara Temple in a lane leading to the Man Mandir Ghat. According to popular belief, if the image is properly worshipped and kept drenched in water, it will fulfil prayers for rain. This same deity was also called the 'poor man's friend'. Accordingly, if a poor man duly worships the deity, he is granted relief from poverty.[47]

Dharmeshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of dharma) : This is situated near the Dharma Kupa.[48]

Nandishwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of Nandi)[49] : Situated near the Jnanavapi, it was constructed by one Rani of Hyderabad.

Nirbudheshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord beyond all intelligence) : Only a few steps to the south-east of Trilochana Temple, this temple was fairly old. The temple structure is plain and not much visited by pilgrims except during festivals.[50]

Jwarahareshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, who dissipates fever) : Located by the side of the Bageshwari Temple in Jaitpura Mahalla, worshippers would vow that should they recover, they would present *dudha-bhang*, a mixture of milk, hemp leaves and sweet-meats, to the deity.[51]

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Indradyumneshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Indradyumna) : This temple is situated near the Manikarnika Ghat.[52]

Parashareshwara Temple (Shiva, the Supreme Lord) : This is located by the side of the temple of Vyaseshwara, near Karnaghanta Talao.[53]

Prahladeshwara[54a] Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by Prahlada, the son of Hiranyakashipu, the king of demons) : Jayanarayan Ghoshal referred to the Prahlada Ghat as early as 1810.[54b] The temple, which is situated at present over the Prahlad Ghat, most probably also existed during this period.[54c]

Vyaseshwara Temple (Lord Shiva dedicated by the sage Vedavyasa, the great compiler of the Vedas) : Located near Ghantakarna Talao,[55] this temple was popularly known as Karnaghanta Talao. Here, in a niche in the wall, the image of Vedavyasa with armlets and anklets was seen by Sherring.

Alpamriteshwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord distributing a little nectar) : The temple forms part of the southwestern angle of the Vriddhakala edifice. It was visited by a considerable number of pilgrims who sought, for themselves and friends, relief from sickness and death.[56]

Markandeshwara Temple, also known as Markandeyeshwara, Markandeyesha and Markandesha[57a] (Lord Shiva, dedicated by Markanda, a sage) : This temple is also located near the Vriddhakala Temple.[57b]

Rukmeshwara Temple (Lord of Gold; or Rukminisha,[58a] that is, Shiva installed by Rukmini) : This temple is near the Chauka Ghat.[58b]

Shukreshwara[59] Temple (Lord Shiva, dedicated by Shukracharya, the son of Bhrigu, the sage, and the preceptor of the demons) : This is a small, quiet temple, situated near Vishwanatha Temple and was visited by those who were desirous of becoming parents of handsome sons.

Sthanu or Sthanwishwara Temple (The deity of Shiva from Thaneshwara, that is, the Kurukshetra)[60] : This temple, standing to one side of the Kurukshetra Talao, was constructed by Rani Bhavani of Bengal.

Siddheshwara Temple (Lord Shiva, installed by the *Siddhas* or adepts) : This temple is near Bageshwari Temple.

Parvatishwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of Parvati or Durga) : The deity, which was popular, had been destroyed along with its shrine by the

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Muslims. After a long period, Gorji, the Gujarati pandit, installed the present deity in its previous place in around 1860.[61]

Dulareshwara Temple : Dedicated to the Lord Shiva in Bengali Tola by a Bengalee aristocrat called Satu Babu around 1815,[62a] it houses a large deity of Shiva in jet black stone. The temple is a lofty one and stands at the centre of an enclosure. On either side of this enclosure there is a row of seven temples, uniform in shape, with towers above and conical symbols of Shiva below. The deity in each of these fifteen temples is still decorated daily with a white streak made of sandalwood paste.[62b]

Pashupatishwara Temple (Shiva, the Lord of animals) : Constructed in 1843[63a] by the order of the king of Nepal, near Lalita Ghat,[63b] it was popularly known as the Nepali Temple and also 'Kashtha Mandir'.[63c] Among all the temples of Varanasi, it was noted for its ornamental wood work, erotic features and Himalayan style. From the Ganga it is a strikingly picturesque[63d] structure, and was quoted as looking like 'a Chinese toy dropped among a quantity of Indian toys'.[63e]

The above study of Shiva temples reveals that while some idols were *swayambhus*, or self-manifested (e.g., Vishwanatha) and some 'spatially transposed' (e.g., Sthanwishwara), others have been installed by either planets and gods (e.g., Brahmeshwara), by Shivaganas (e.g., Ghanta-karneshwara), by great saints (e.g., Vyaseshwara)[64] or by chiefs and landlords (e.g., Pashupatishwara or Pashupatinatha).

TEMPLES OF DURGA, HER DIFFERENT FORMS, AND LAKSHMI

Annapurna Temple: Annapurna is a form of Durga and the literal meaning of the word is 'the goddess of food or plenty'.[65a] The present temple of Annapurna was constructed by a Maratha, Vishnu Mahadev, in 1781. It has a tower over which a gold vase, or *suvarnakalasa*, is set and a dome.[65b] The dome is sustained by pillars between which a bell has been suspended that is almost always sounding.[65c] There are platforms on all sides which provides space for the feeding of hundreds of Brahmins.[65d] On the eastern portion of the temple, the sanctorum is situated, while the *natmandira* is on the west. In the northeast of the quadrangle there is a small shrine of the Sun seated in a chariot drawn by seven horses; while in the southeast is one of Ganesha; in the northwest there is one of Parashurameshwara, and finally, in the southwest there is one of Kubereshwaras. To the west is another temple of Shri Ramachandra set up by Vishnu Mahadev, the builder of the Annapurna Temple.[65e]

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In front of the entrance gate to Annapurna Temple, beggars would be seated throughout the day, some holding bowls into which small quantities of grain or rice were given by visitors. Similar scenes of alms-giving were also visible within the courtyard. The priests of the temple were said to have received presents for the poor in addition to the offerings made to themselves. There was a stone box in one corner of the courtyard for gifts like rice and grain as well.

Durga Temple (Consort of Lord Shiva and the Goddess who derived her name from Durgama, a demon she slew) : This temple is at one side of the Durga Kunda in the south of the City. This was one of the most frequented temples in Varanasi during this period and continues to be so today. A small shrine to the Goddess formerly stood in a jungle when Rani Bhavani of Bengal built the present structure around 1760 for approximately Rs. 50,000.[66a] The temple stands in the midst of a quadrangle surrounded by high walls. The main entrance, on the western side, is opposite the high road. In front of the doorway, is a *naubatkhana* where musical instruments are still played three times a day for the enjoyment of the Goddess. On either side of the naubatkhana, were two pillars, one of which was surmounted by a figure of a large lion, while the other, about two feet high, was used as an altar for sacrifices.

In the temple, two large bells, gifts from the Raja of Nepal and William Grant, a collector of Varanasi, are suspended.[66b] The occasion of Grant's gift was that once Grant, with his wife and children, had almost drowned when caught in a whirlpool in a boat off a ghat near Ramnagar. The boatmen prayed to Durga and then succeeded in bringing the passengers safely to shore. In gratitude, Grant presented the bell in 1808.[66c]

The temple and the porch, although attached, are two distinct buildings, the temple erected by Rani Bhavani and the porch by one *subahdar* around 1860.[66d] The architecture of this temple is simple and was built after the orthodox model of Hindu temples. In the interior of the temple there is a small shrine, the abode of the Goddess Durga who is decorated with a garland and necklace of gold coins.

This was the only temple in the City where bloody sacrifices were offered to the Goddess by devotees, either with the hope of fulfilment or after the fulfilment of some temporal desire.[66e] Owing to the association of this temple with a great number of monkeys, the temple was referred to by many European travellers as 'the monkey temple'.[66f]

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Mangala Gauri Temple (A form of auspicious Gouri, that is, Durga)[67a] : The temple of this deity, after which a ghat[67b] was named, exists today[67c] and most probably existed during the nineteenth century as well. A mahalla, named after this deity, has been mentioned in a mahalla list as early as 1796.[67d]

Lalita Temple (Lalita Gauri, a Goddess who came to the City with other Goddesses to protect the holy sites of Varanasi)[68a] : A temple of the deity, after whom a ghat was named,[68b] exists today[68c] and perhaps also existed in the nineteenth century.[68d]

Rajeshwari Temple (A form of Durga)[69a]: The site of the deity, after which a ghat was named,[69b] still exists.[69c]

Siddheshwari Temple (Also Siddha Yogishwari, the *Shakti* of Shiva)[70a] : This temple, which consists of two small quadrangles, is located to the side of Sankata Temple.[70b] Devotees suffering from ailments of the liver and various pains visited the deity and offered her flowers and Ganga water in the expectation of getting relief.[70c] A mahalla was named after the deity.[70d]

Siddhimata Temple (Popularly called Siddhmata, one of the Nine Durgas)[71a] : Located in Bulanala Mahalla,[71b] the Ahmethi Raja, Shri Lal Bahadur Singh, presented a stone statue of a lion to this temple around 1860.[71c] A mahalla was named after the deity.[71d]

Vishalakshi Temple (The large-eyed Durga)[72] : Situated near Mir Ghat, only the crowned head of the deity was visible, the rest of her portion being covered with a cloth.

Dipta Temple (A form of shining or resplendent Durga)[73a] : This temple stands to one side of the Surya Kunda.[73b]

Mahalakshmi Temple (Goddess of great wealth)[74a] : This temple is near the Lakshmi Kunda.[74b]

Shitala Temple (The Goddess presiding over small pox) : It is located near Kalabhairava Temple. In it there are seven figures in bas-relief, which represent seven sisters known as *Sapta Matrika*.[75]

TEMPLES OF GANESHA

Of the temples of Ganesha or Vinayaka, seventy-six were Vinayakas mentioned in the Puranas, and among them, fifty-six, generally known as *Chhappan* (fifty-six) *Vinayak*, were *Kshetra Rakshakas* (protectors of the

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holy area). Ganesha was and is extensively worshipped in Varanasi and there was hardly any temple here in which the deity of Ganesha could not be found. Among the many deities of Ganesha, the installations that follow were best known to the devotees of our period :

Dhundhi Raja or **Dhundhi Vinayaka Temple** : The original site was at Rani Bhavani's temple just over the present site of the deity near Annapurna Temple.[76]

Sakshi Vinayaka Temple (Vinayaka, the witness)[77a] : Situated near the Annapurna Temple area, it occupied a square erected by a Maratha around 1760.[77b] After completing the *Panchakroshi* pilgrimage, the pilgrims would visit this deity, who, it was believed, would verify and attest to the fact of their pilgrimage.[77c] A mahalla was named after this deity.[77d]

Panchasya Vinayaka (Ganesha with five trunks) : This deity was installed within a temple constructed by one Mirch Bai, on the eastern bank of the Pishachmochan Tank.[78]

Siddha Vinayaka Temple : Located near the Manikarnika Ghat, the deity has an ancient reputation, but the temple is perhaps of a more modern construction.[79]

Baḍa Ganesha (the great Ganesha) : In Ausanganj Mahalla, there was a temple to Baḍa Ganesha with silver hands and feet and his head was decorated with a gilded nimbus. The present temple was reported to have been built around 1844.[80]

Ganesha (near Adi Mahadeva) : Behind a peepul tree near the site of the Adi Mahadeva Temple, was a temple dedicated to Ganesha.[81]

TEMPLES OF SHIVA'S ATTENDANTS

Kalabhairava Temple (also called Bhaironath, a god-magistrate of the City and attendant of Shiva)[82a] : This temple was constructed by Sardar Vinchurkar, Commander-in-Chief of the Peshwa Baji Rao,[82b] in about 1825 under terms of a vow to do so if he reached Varanasi safely.[82c] The adjacent mahalla was named after the deity.[82d]

The walls on both sides of the door leading into the temple were decorated with paintings. On the right wall, there was a large figure of Kalabhairava painted in a deep blue colour and behind him there was the figure of a dog. On the left side of the doorway, there was a large figure of

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a dog and above it there were ten small paintings of the ten avataras of Vishnu.[82e] At the entrance of the shrine, there were two images, called 'Dwarapaleshwara', which stood on either side of the doorway. The interior of the shrine consisted of a small room with a small copper shrine to one side. This was the habitation of Bhaironath.

The deity was made of stone, though his face was made of silver, and his head was encircled with garlands. Near the deity, a small oil lamp is kept burning. A priest sits close by and applies 'kundi', a coloured powder, to devotees foreheads. Dogs were permitted to enter this temple because of their association with the deity. Worshippers purchased small images of dogs made of sugar from the sellers nearby and presented them to Kalabhairava as offerings.

Bhuta Bhairo Temple[83a] : This was an old temple located near that of Kashi Devi.[83b] The image has a moustache, the end of which is finely curved. The head and part of the neck are visible from outside, while the remaining portion of the body is covered with an apron.[83c] A mahalla was named after this deity.[83d]

Dandapani Temple (A form of Bhairava) : Situated near the Kalabhairava Temple, the stone image representing this deity is about four feet high and was especially worshipped every Tuesday and Sunday by many devotees.[84]

Moreover, the deities of Asitanga Bhairava, Kapala Bhairava, Krodhana Bhairava and Samhara Bhairava were installed in Vriddhakal, Lat Bhairo, Kamakhya and Trilochan Ganj respectively.[85]

TEMPLES OF DURGA'S ATTENDANTS

Choushatti Devi Temple (Choushatti Devi represents the Choushatti Yoginis, the female attendants of the goddess Kali): This temple remains on the bank of Choushatti Yogini Ghat in Bengali Tola. It continues to be visited by large numbers of devotees on the day of *Holi*.[86a] An image of a lion made of stone was presented to this temple by the Raja of Amethi, Shri Lal Bahadur Singh, around 1850.[86b] A gate, mahalla and ghat were named after this deity.[86c]

Tripura Bhairavi Temple (The female deity which emerged from the body of Goddess Durga) : Jayanarayan Ghoshal[87] referred to a ghat with this name in 1810, and a temple to this deity, which also possibly existed during the period under review, is found situated near that ghat today. A

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mahalla was named after this deity and was mentioned as early as in a 1796 list of mahallas.*

Sankata Temple (The deity Vikata, one of the eight Matrikas or female deities)[88a] : Near Vireshwara Temple,[88b] She was held in great reverence by devotees who approached her to get relief from all sorts of *sankata* or troubles.[88c] The shrine is situated to one side of a spacious quadrangle.[88d] A mahalla[88e] and ghat[88f] were named after this deity.

Varahi Temple (One of the eight Matrikas)[89a] : Located by the side of Someshwara Temple near Man Mandir Ghat,[89b] She was held to be a very potent goddess and to have the power of healing any swelling in the hands or feet.[89c]

TEMPLES OF VISHNU AND KRISHNA

Adi Keshava Temple (Lord Vishnu) : This temple sits at the confluence of the Varuna and Ganga Rivers. The present temple was the largest of four temples erected in the City by the Diwan of Sindhia perhaps in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The deity, in the interior of the shrine, is dressed in grey robes with a crown. There has been an image of the Sun within the same chamber. The porch of the temple, on its eastern side, rests on ten pillars. Below the porch are various idols, one is Sangameshwara, and Brahmeshwara is another. The Government took possession of this temple during the Revolt of 1857 on grounds that its owner was seditious and consequently it was closed down for a long time.[90]

Lakshminarayana or Nagpur Raja Bhonsla Temple (Lord Vishnu) : This was constructed on the Bhonsla Ghat in the early nineteenth century by the Bhonsla of Nagpur. In addition to the deities of Lakshminarayana and Narayana, the Raja also installed the deities of Murlidhar, Bhawani Shankar, Ramchandra Ranganath and Raghoo Rajeshwar.**

Jagannatha Temple (A form of Lord Vishnu) : The main temple,[91a] a magnificent building, stands near Asi Ghat.[91b] Another small temple of the deity, along with Balaram and Subhadra, is situated near the site of Baḍa Ganesha in Ausan Ganj Mahalla.[91c]

Radha-Krishna Temple (Dedicated to Shri Krishna and his consort

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* See Chapter II.

** For further details, see p.203 and Appendix B of this chapter.

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Radha) : This temple was situated on the Mir Ghat. The deities are in a standing position, side by side and fully dressed, with the deity of Krishna playing a flute. The temple contained a number of small paintings, a red image of Ganesha, and a tiny shrine in white marble.[92]

Gopala or **Gopal Lal**[93a] **Temple** (The child Krishna) : Situated in the Chowkhamba area, this temple belonged to the Ballabhacharya sect of the Vaishnavas.[93b] It had enormous riches.[93c] The devotees would sing devotional songs with various indigenous musical instruments such as the *mridanga, tambura*, and *veena* in the temple. Another custom was *jhanki darshan*, that is, allowing periodic short glimpses of the deity.[93d] As practised in some temples in Vrindaban, here the deity could also only be seen for short periods between long intervals.[93e] The *prasada* of the deity was openly sold.[93f] *Janmashtami*, the anniversary of Krishna, was celebrated with great pomp and grandeur. Another important festival was the *Danbhand*.[93g] This deity was of great importance, especially among the Noupatti bankers, traders and merchants of the City, who held it in high esteem and devotion. Their veneration for, and offerings to this sacred temple formed the principal source of happiness for them.[93h]

In fact, the expenses for the service of the deity and the maintenance of the temple were largely borne by these Noupatti bankers, business men and merchants and also by the Kashi Naresh, namely Balwant Singh and Chet Singh.[93i] The priests of the temple were inclined to shift the deity from the City in 1798, since their income had greatly diminished, owing to the withdrawal of offerings by the Kashi Naresh and the comparatively lesser donations from the banking and business community. The Noupatti bankers[93j] prayed to the Government for a grant in the form of some establishment allowances on the plea that they should follow the precedent of the previous Kashi Naresh in this regard; that such charity would bring benefit to the petitioners; and that such an act would also bring perpetual countenance to the Honourable Company's prosperity.[93k] The Governor General, however, did not entertain this petition.[93l] Despite this, the deity was never moved from Varanasi. A mahalla was named after the temple of the deity.[93m]

TEMPLES OF RAMA AND HANUMANA

Rama Temple[94a] : Located on the Panchaganga Ghat within a big mansion estate called Kanganwali Haveli, the building has extensive frontage on the Ganga. This mansion was owned by the Jaipur State of

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Rajasthan and was visited by Tavernier.[94b] The Rama Temple, fortunately, did not suffer at the hands of the Muslim iconoclasts.[94c] Sherring called the building 'Lakshmanbala',[94d] which according to him, was named after Lakshmana (the brother of Rama). Sherring remarked that it was the only temple he saw in Varanasi that had enough space for devotees to be seated within the room while telling their beads and muttering to themselves the names of their chosen deities.

Hanumana or **Mahavira Temple** : Like Ganesha, the image of Hanumana was worshipped in many temples[95a] and in some cases it had separate temples like this one near the Kapalmochan Tank.[95b]

TEMPLE OF SURYA

Shambaditya Temple (The Sun-god installed by Shamba, son of Krishna and Jambavati)[96a] : Popularly called Surajnarayan, it stands to the side of Suraj Kunda.[96b] The temple was erected by the Raja of Kotabundi in around 1860. On the floor of the temple there is an old, large, round flat stone, the image of the Sun-god. A special Puja was performed on Sundays and *homa* was performed in its honour in a small house nearby, during which a pandit would read out parts of the *Surya Purana*.[96c]

TEMPLES OF MISCELLANEOUS DEITIES

Kashidevi Temple : Kashidevi is the titular goddess of the City. The temple was situated near a banyan tree in Kashipura Mahalla.[97]

Varanasi Devi Temple (Goddess of the City of Varanasi) : The image is black and installed in a small shrine within the Trilochana Temple enclosure.

Vageshwari Temple (Goddess) : Located near Nag Kuan, her face is made of eight kinds of metal, grotesquely burnished. On her head is a large crown and she is dressed in a cloth and seated on a lion. The verandah within the temple contained paintings of mythical subjects. A stone statue of a lion, the carrier of the goddess, was also presented by Raja Lal Bahadur Singh of Amethi in around 1860.[98]

Navagraha Temple (Nine planets; Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu) : This temple, dedicated to nine *grahas* (planets), was unique in the City. It was situated a short distance to the east of the Bhaironath Temple. The images of grahas were placed in three rows.[99]

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Shanichar Temple (Shani or Saturn) : Situated near Annapurna Temple, the deity representing the planet had a silver head, and the rest of his person was covered. Rev. Sherring recorded that it was said of the deity that for seven and a half years Shani troubled the life of men in general, but his worshippers were exempted from this ordeal.[100] This temple was different from that of Shanishchareshwara, which was installed within the enclosure of the Vishwanatha Temple.

TEMPLE COMPLEXES

Temples of Rani Bhavani[101a] : Rani Bhavani, a wealthy Bengalee lady, constructed four stone temples in one location of Bengali Tola Mahalla. In one, a Jaya Durga deity was installed in the northern edifice and the Shyama deity in the southern edifice. In another temple, situated in the centre, the idols of Vishalakshi, Bala Gopala and Radhakrishna were installed in the eastern, northern and southern sides respectively. A large deity of the Goddess Tara (a form of Durga) was kept out of sight. Deities of Shiva, made by sculptors from Nadia in Bengal, were installed in the temples. In the fourth edifice, called Chhatra Bati, the worship of the Goddess Durga was performed and food was distributed free to the sadhus and students. The clock-house (Ghaḍi Ghar) and Naubatkhana are situated above the street. There were five or six more houses, constructed by the same Rani, which were meant for different purposes such as the feeding of ascetics and guests.[101b]

Temple complex near Mansarovar Ghat[102] : Near Mansarovar Ghat, over the Ganga, was Mansarovar, a big kunda around which are about fifty shrines; one of the more prominent among these shrines was dedicated to Ramachandra and Lakshmana. In one niche of these shrines was an idol of Dattatreya, the great sage. Rev. Sherring roughly estimated that there were upwards of one thousand idols at this spot, all of which were perhaps installed by Raja Man Singh, the famous Rajput General of Akbar.

Sherring also mentioned the following temples, but details regarding them are not known:[103]

The Temple of Kunu Sahu : At the corner of two streets encountered while proceeding from Trilochana Temple to Trilochan Ghat, was a temple built by one Kunu Sahu around the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It has been recorded that this temple, though small in size, was elegant with its porches supported on beautifully carved pillars. It is not known what deity was installed in this temple.

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A large temple, opposite that of Kunu Sahu and also built around the second quarter of the nineteenth century, was built in quadrangles. Further details were not available regarding this temple.

BLOCKS OF STONE REPRESENTING TEMPLES

Blocks of stone, which had a pyramid shape and were engraved on their surface with crude carvings of small temples, were found in various parts of the City. For example, as many as seven such blocks in the court of Bhuta Bhairava and one near the Pishachmochan Tank were found by Rev. Sherring.[104]

DEITIES HAVING NO SPECIAL TEMPLE

The following available pieces of information are furnished about deities which had no temples of their own, but were found near or within the temples of other deities around the period from the second to the third quarter of the nineteenth century. There were, however, many more deities without special temples, as will be evident from a comparative study of the descriptive list of temples in this chapter and a list of deities and their sites placed in the Appendix.

Kotilingeshwara (Innumerable form of Lord Shiva) : This is Kotishwara Shiva, according to the *Kashi Khandam.*[105a] It stood apart from all the shrines within the Trilochana Temple enclosure. Upon this deity, which was huge, hundreds of emblems of Shiva were carved.[105b]

Sangameshwara (Lord Shiva presiding over the confluence of the Ganga and the Varuna rivers)[106a] : It was installed within the Adikeshava Temple below the porch.[106b]

Saraswatishwara (Lord Shiva, installed by the Saraswati River) : It was installed within the enclosure of the Trilochana Temple.

Yamuneshwara (Lord Shiva, installed by the Yamuna River) : It was also installed within the enclosure of the Trilochana Temple.

Ashtabhuja (The Goddess having eight hands, a form of Durga): It reclined at the foot of a *neem* (margosa) tree near Tilabhandeshwara Temple.[107]

Mahakala (God of fate)[108] : The image of this god was installed within the temple of Dandapani Bhairava, near the Kalkuan, or well of fate.

Dattatreya (A sage who dedicated the Dattatreyeshwara Shiva)[109] :

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This image was installed in a niche in the enclosure of the Kedareshwara Temple.

Karkotaka Naga (A serpent deity) : The deity, a figure representing three snakes, was installed in a niche in the wall of one of the stairs of the well of Nag Kuan. Nearby, there was an emblem of Shiva with a snake crawling on it. A considerable number of people visited this place on the 24th and 25th of the month of *Shravana* on the occasion of *Naga Panchami*.[110]

There are also other references to installations of deities at various sites by many devoted Hindus during the period under review, but it is almost impossible to identify these sites. For example, one Bimala Devi of Mymansingh and Rani Bhubanmoyee of Puntia, both Bengalees, installed a number of deities in the first part of the nineteenth century. But the sites of these deities could not be identified.

GURUDHAMA : A SYMBOLIC TEMPLE

A temple called Gurudhama, which was situated in the then Kashmiri Ganj Mahalla near Durga Kunda, was extraordinary for the ideas that worked behind its construction. The temple is said to have been erected in 1814 on 12.01 acres of land.[111] According to one source, however, it was constructed in 1827.[112] That such a unique temple was hardly frequented, either by pilgrims or other visitors, is evident from the fact that it was not mentioned in any contemporary travelogue on the City or in Rev. Sherring's monograph on Varanasi, a directory of almost all the important temples of nineteenth century Varanasi. Perhaps this was because of the fact that neither the site nor the deity of this temple had any association with the religious traditions of the City. Moreover, its unique construction, giving shape to the spiritual ideas of a mastermind, may have been unintelligible to ordinary pilgrims and casual visitors. Consequently, this temple lay desolate at the outskirts of the City being neither identified nor appreciated.

The designer and builder of the temple was Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal, an aristocrat of Bengal. Very little is known about the background or other details of this novel construction.[113] Though Jayanarayan was the author of a number of works, including an account of the City, nowhere in his work does he mention this temple. Only a faint echo of the idea behind such a construction may be inferred from a few lines in his account entitled *Kashi Parikrama*.*

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* For further details about Jayanarayan Ghoshal, see Chapters XIII and XVI.

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The chosen deity of Jayanarayan was Karunanidhana, i.e., Shri Krishna. Hence the deity of Shri Krishna, along with the deity of Shri Radha, the beloved of Shri Krishna, was installed in the temple. But as the very name of the temple suggests, it was a temple dedicated to the preceptor (guru) who would lead the disciple to the highest goal of spiritual experience. The significance of Gurudhama Temple is presented below.[114]

IMPORTANCE OF GURUDHAMA

Through this temple, it has been attempted to visualize one of the spiritual practices of India in its entirety. Such a well-planned, wonderful temple is very rare in India. The founder visualized profound truths of spiritual practice through the use of structural symbols. The following is a brief sketch of those truths and their relation to respective symbols.

Role of the Preceptor

Man is by origin identical with God, but under the spell of cosmic nescience (maya), he is separated from Him. Troubled by ignorance and the consequences of the actions thereof, he is ceaselessly moving in this universe. He is moved by the heavy strokes of pleasure and pain, of hope and fear and the like. But this is not the whole of the picture of his circumstances. There is also a way out. And he, who out of great compassion, imparts the true knowledge of the real nature of man, his origin and potential ability, and delivers him from this narrow and miserable existence, is the Preceptor or Guru. The underlying principles of Gurudhama Temple are that it is only through the Preceptor that we may march on our way to the realization of the ultimate Truth and that there are different ways to reach the Preceptor.

The Circle and the Three Divisions

In a wider sense, Gurudhama is a great, illumined circle at the centre of which resides the Preceptor in his temple. The large area Gurudhama occupies, may be separated into three divisions. All three, taken either collectively or individually, are called the Gurudhama. The area surrounded by walls and enclosing all the temples, is the first division. The second division comprises the eight-angled inner apartment (*Antargriha*) within which lies the temple of the Preceptor, which, again, is situated at the very centre of the whole area. The third division is the abode of the shoes (*Padukabhavan*) which lies parallel with the inner apartment and is situated to the west.

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The Naubatkhana

At the entrance, a *naubatkhana*, that is, a concert room, has been set up to the extreme east. If one enters the Gurudhama, he will surely be liberated from the fetters of ignorance and will realize one's real nature or Self and Gurudhama has been designed as a place of great festival for anyone desiring liberation from worldly bondage. The naubatkhana conceptualizes this festival of the soul. Though it is a custom to build a naubatkhana with almost all temples, this one at Gurudhama deserves special mention because perhaps nothing in this temple has been constructed only for the sake of custom.

The Narayana Kunda

If one enters through the east gateway of the naubatkhana, one finds a water tank to the south. This tank is called Narayana Kunda. The tutelary deity, residing on the first floor of the Gurumandira, is Radha-Krishna; the name 'Narayana Kunda' is appropriate because it has been named after the deity whose incarnation is Krishna. To enter the temple it is necessary to bathe in this tank and to thus be imbibed with the lofty ideas of the Gurudhama. The tank, therefore, symbolizes the purification of the heart.

The Antargriha with Eight Angles and Eight Dvaras (Doors)

Having left the tank, as one moves onward, to the front one sees the inner apartment (Antargriha) at the centre of which there stands the Gurumandira. Surrounded, as it is, by walls, the inner apartment has eight angles. This apartment has eight doors on its eight sides, and each door has a specific structure and a name. The eastern door is called *Kashidvara*; the north-eastern door, the *Mathuradvara*; the northern door, the *Mayadvara*; the north-western door, the *Ayodhyadvara*; the western door, the *Avantidvara*; the south-western door, the *Purushottamadvara*; the southern door, the *Kanchidvara*; and the south-eastern door, the *Gurudvara*. Above each door there are pictures chiseled in stone. These images convey certain ideas. For example, the supine hands sculpted on the Gurudvara are depicted in a specific fashion to symbolize the assurance of protection by the Preceptor.

The Special Import of Kashidvara

These eight doors signify the eight directions; *Purva* (East), *Pashchima* (West), *Uttara* (North), *Dakshina* (South), *Agni* (South-east), *Nairit* (South-west), *Vayu* (North-west) and *Ishana* (North-east). They also

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signify different spiritual paths. Of the eight doors, seven have been named after seven cities that are recognized in sacred books as cities where salvation is granted, and the other was named after the founder's Guru (Preceptor) in accordance with his specific ideas. It is beyond doubt that the first gate is known as Kashidvara and it is the main-gate facing east. This gate has been named Kashidvara because Kashi (Varanasi) is to the east. Moreover, the importance of the Kashidvara may be due to the fact that Varanasi enjoys the supreme position among the sacred cities and that Gurudhama Temple is situated in this very City. When one enters through this gate and finds the statues of Garuḍa and Mahavira, one realizes that the founder of the temple was conscious of the importance and priority of Kashidvara. Statues of such legendary devotees are not found at the temple's other gates.

Significance of the Eight Dvaras

Each gate signifies one of the paths leading to the Abode of Eternal Bliss (*Mokshadhama*). These paths are different from each other according to different *Prasthanas*. Some of them, e.g., the Avantidvara and the Kashidvara, arouse ideas of Lord Shiva, while the Ayodhyadvara, Mathuradvara and Puridvara provoke thoughts of Lord Vishnu. But the Kanchidvara awakens ideas of both Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu, while the Mayadvara signifies those of Shakti. Since these three kinds of spiritual practice were in vogue, these three paths represent all the paths of spiritual practice. But the *Guru-marga*, or the path of spiritual practice by which the Guru or Preceptor assists the disciple to achieve the final spiritual goal, is something yet different from these three.

Significance of the Eight Courtyards

Each gate leads to a separate courtyard. These courtyards are separated from each other by intermediate walls. Each courtyard is characterized by the specific architectural features of the accompanying gate. All these courtyards have been constructed inwards and terminate at the eight-angled central temple. At the central temple all the distinguishing features have merged into one whole. There is no wall to separate one from the other. This can fairly be compared to an eight-petalled lotus wherein the eight different petals merge into the single central pericarp, as these eight courtyards have merged into the eight-angled central temple. The eight

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angles may be taken as symbols of eight ideas, or eight *shaktis*, or eight female leaders of the sect of the worshippers of the Goddess, or eight Bhairavas of the Shivas, or the eight lords of the mantras recognized in the *Agama*.

The Five Steps and Panchakalas

To arrive at the central temple from any one of the courtyards, one is required to cross five ascending stages. These five stages may be regarded as symbols of the five *Kalas*, because, if one does not step upon the *Pancha-Kala*, the *Nivritti*, *Pratishtha*, *Vidya*, *Shanti* and *Shantyatita*, one cannot come into contact with Absolute Bliss (*Parama Shiva*) or the Universal Preceptor (*Vishva Guru*). This division of stages signifies the stages of spiritual practice.

The Central Temple of the Preceptor with Form

The central or main temple is also eight-angled, although it has only four gates. Within the temple, there is an eight-angled altar upon which there is a thousand-petalled lotus. Upon the lotus is a statue of the Preceptor, which is made of eight metals. On the left thigh of the Preceptor, sits *Guru-Shakti*. The thousand-petalled lotus signifies the seventh *chakra* of the body. The Guru is conceived to be meditated upon with His Shakti being situated on the pericarp of this thousand petalled lotus. The whole body, from the *Muladhara* up to the *Sahasrara*, is a temple. This is signified by the central temple of the Guru. The four gates of the temple represent the Muladhara, which is conceived as having four doors, and the thousand-petalled lotus represents the symbol Sahasrara.

Radha-Krishna, the Tutelary Deity

On the first floor of the temple of the Preceptor, there resides an image of Radha-Krishna, the tutelary deity. Having resort in a Preceptor with form (*Sakara Guru*), the devotee can ascend by this way to spiritual fulfilment. This ascending path has been symbolized by a staircase inside the temple. This little staircase also has the symbol of the *sushumna* in it. It stretches from the ground floor up to the second floor. The devotee who ascends by this way will arrive at the eternal playground lying by the side of the tutelary deity. But the founder of the temple perhaps thought of other paths besides the *Guru-marga*. The double-faced staircases situated at the four gates are symbols of these other, separate paths.

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The Paduka Mandira (Sandal-Temple) of the Preceptor without Form

From both places where the Preceptor with form and the eternal playground of the tutelary deity lie, it is possible to ascend to the Preceptor without form (*Nirakara Guru*). Just as a devotee can enter the Paduka Temple (*Paduka Mandira*) with the assistance of the Preceptor, he can do the same by having resorted to the tutelary deity also. This has been indicated by the path which runs from the altar of the tutelary deity to the Paduka Temple. From both these places, the devotee, if he chooses the westerly direction, can see the *padukas* in the open air. This pair of padukas is the final way, which having resorted to, one may achieve the Supreme Goal.

Fourteen Shiva Temples :
Gradation of Paths Leading to the Preceptor without Form

To indicate the gradation of this path there are fourteen temples in two parallel rows, each row, to the left and right, having seven temples. These temples also signify different ideas. Here it is to be noticed that everywhere is manifested the idea of Lord Shiva, because the realization of the perfect manifestation of the idea of Lord Shiva is the highest ideal of the *Jiva*. Without being absorbed in thought of Lord Shiva, it is impossible to enter the Paduka Temple, nor is it possible to see the padukas.

Second Floor of the Main Temple :
Symbol of Infinity and Nirvana

The true devotee is able to see a second way open before him from the abode of the tutelary deity on the first floor. This way runs upwards through the sushumna to the infinite sky, or the ultimate cessation of mundane existence. If one follows the upward way, one can arrive at the second floor through the sushumna. This is the only way to arrive at the second floor. The sushumna way stretches from the first floor to the second floor.

On the second floor there is also an eight-angled room which has four gates. But in this room there is no altar, no statue, no upward staircase. This temple on the second floor is the symbol of the infinite sky. It is surrounded by walls, so one is expected to realize that the infinite sky is also surrounded. That is why the devotee should rise higher and higher piercing this infinite sky. But in fact, if one rises by piercing this infinite

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sky, the question of ascending or descending does not arise at all. Thus realization is the real *nirvana*, or the complete cessation of mundane existence and the entering into the eternal and infinite sky of consciousness. A pot filled with holy water lying on the roof of the temple of the second floor signifies absolute nirvana. The pot is like a lotus with countless petals of which eight downward petals have spread out in eight directions, some middle petals are half opened, and above are found innumerable petals only slightly opened. Thus the pot signifies the union of the finite and the infinite.

Special Import of Gurupaduka

The placing of padukas in the temple is very significant. Padukas are symbols of the state of having taken refuge. The ivory sandals of the Preceptor have been placed on a sacred altar. The footprints of Radha-Krishna have been depicted below the padukas of the Preceptor. By this symbol, it is indicated that the Preceptor, without form, occupies the highest position. This Preceptor is certainly not an embodied guru of flesh and blood, yet it should be borne in mind that the Preceptor possessing a physical body can help the disciple to arrive at the Preceptor-principle. That is why, in every sacred book, the greatness of the Preceptor has been recognized so much. In this temple, we see that though the Preceptor with form can help the disciple toward his spiritual fulfilment, his position is still below that of the tutelary deity. Nevertheless, the Preceptor without form occupies the supreme rank, illustrated by his padukas having been kept above all gods.

Attainment of the Preceptor without Form

Just as both the follower of the *Jnana-marga* and that of the *Bhakti-marga* are required to travel the *Brahma-marga* or the sushumna in order to ascend towards the infinite sky, so also, in order to reach the padukas the devotee has to follow a path. The march towards the padukas is possible from the Preceptor on the ground floor or from the tutelary deity on the first floor. But since the abode of the padukas is separate from the main temple, and since it has four gates, it seems that the padukas of the Preceptor or the foot-prints of the tutelary deity can be achieved only by an intense thought or meditation of the Preceptor. This is why one can go to the abode of the paduka without going through any gate of the inner apartment.

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The Absolute Bliss

Therefore, within the Gurudhama, it is indicated by symbols that one can achieve absolute nirvana by piercing the infinite sky and also that one can reach the abode of the padukas either through the seven places (*saptabhumi*) or by following any other way. The result of both these two marches is one and the same. For example, the padukas are the doors through which one can reach the ultimate spiritual goal. Finally, a state comes where the question of the padukas does not arise at all. There is no question of taking refuge. That state is beyond the alternative of any dualism. Likewise, beyond nirvana there comes a state of absolute equilibrium, where the distinction between *samsara* and *nirvana* disappears wholly. Then the question of any alternative does not arise at all. These two kinds of rest are by nature one and the same. This is the absolute rest. Since it is beyond the reach of Gurudhama and beyond all ideas, it cannot be symbolized. That is why there is no symbol of it, yet Gurudhama points to that absolute bliss.

TEMPLE ESTABLISHMENTS

Now let us look into the details of the establishment of the temples, regarding which the following questions are important :

First, how were the expenses of the worship of deities, the repairs and maintenance of the temple-buildings, and the maintenance of the temple-staff defrayed ? Secondly, what were the assets of the temples and articles of use for the deities ? Thirdly, who were the personnel of the temple ? Fourthly, were any humanitarian services conducted by the temple establishment ?

Nagpur Temples of the City: A Case Study

One can get a fair idea of the issues raised above from a detailed report on the temples of Nagpur State, or the Bhonslas, which was prepared when an investigation into the Nagpur temples of the City was made in 1856, not long after the Government's takeover of Nagpur State.[115] Nagpur temples were representative of those that enjoyed the patronage of the chiefs and other affluent and influential persons.

This report includes the following details of immovable properties (i.e., buildings, lands, articles etc., belonging to the temples) :

> 'First : the house and ghat of Bhonsla Ghat (corrupted into Ghosla Ghat) consisted of 3456 yards, on which stood two large and two small temples. The house was

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of two stories made of stone. Two outside rooms of the house were let out at the rate of eleven rupees per mensem.

Second: the house of Bhavani Shankar in Mahalla Siddheshwari, had an area of 260 yards. It had three stories and was made of stone and brick and contained temples. Two outside rooms of the house were let at 7 Rs. per mensem.

Third: a house at Ram Ghat had an area of 36 yards. It was three stories high, and it was occupied by four images.

Fourth: three houses at Durga Ghat consisted of 51 yards, 37 yards and 86 yards, having rents of Rs. 36, Rs.40 and Rs.35 per annum respectively.

Fifth: the house at Pathar Gali consisting of 382 yards, contained 1 image, with rent of Rs. 50 annually.

The total amount of rents from these houses amounted to Rs. 593 per annum and Rs. 300 was spent for repairing these buildings annually.' *

It may be roughly estimated from the deposition given by Dewan Raghojee, the manager of the temples, that per annum, about Rs. 2,500 were spent for maintaining the establishments, while Rs. 11, 200 were spent for feeding the Brahmins and others at the temple who would also receive alms from temple funds.

It is evident from the details of the properties of the Nagpur temples that these temples were enormously rich. There were elaborate arrangements for day to day worship and the deities had costly dresses and ornaments. Systems for the regular playing of instrumental music, reading of the scriptures by the *pauraniks*, lighting in the temples, time-keeping, maintaining a flowering garden, cooking food and cleaning and maintaining sanitation were also there. There were provisions for feeding the Brahmins and the poor. An establishment for carrying out official works regarding the temples and security arrangements for the temples also existed. Accounts were kept in Persian and it is worth mentioning in this connection that a Muslim writer was appointed to the temple staff. The above mentioned deposition also furnishes valuable and interesting pieces of information about the ornaments, dresses, puja- articles, utensils, furniture (with prices), salaries and wages for different jobs, rents of rooms, etc., that were current in Varanasi during the period under review.

Were such detailed accounts available for other temples, such as Vishwanatha, Annapurna, Kedaranatha and the like, a comparison with the Nagpur Temples would probably reveal many commonalities regarding

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* Further details of 'moveable properties and establishments' have been placed in the Appendix.

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these establishments. Corroboration of this supposition can be found in the following observations of a European traveller who writes :

> 'Many of the temples were endowed with overflowing funds for their support and to others were attached the revenue of large tracts of land, and from these stores they were obliged, after providing for their own necessities, to administer assistance to the sick or enfeebled among the pilgrims who had no means of their own, and in reality the temples were frequently observed to render such good services to the distressed.'[116]

There was a long tradition of keeping dancing girls on the temple-establishment, especially in South India. But it is a point of debate whether this system was a regular feature of Varanasi temples. No doubt, on certain occasions dancing was held at a holy site or in front of a deity. There are ample references to such dancing and it is reported that even today the dancing girls of the City flock to Adi Vishweshwara Temple once a year and dance there the whole night.[117] While most contemporary travellers and writers, including Jayanarayan Ghoshal, Bishop Heber and Rev. Sherring, are totally silent about this issue, at least two travellers, one Indian and one foreigner, wrote that a troupe of dancing girls was maintained by some temples, and that at festivals organized by these temples, these dancers attended religious processions and performed their art. The travellers added that although the conduct of these girls was less than immaculate, they were not held in less esteem on this account, since theirs was a sacred calling.[118]

It has been already written, while dealing with the Vishwanatha Temple, that according to a Bengalee traveller, dancing and singing formed part of the routine worship of the Lord. Naturally, one would be inclined to believe that the customs of *Devadasi*, with some moderations, were current to a certain extent in Varanasi too, even in the nineteenth century.[119]

HOLY TANKS AND WELLS AND OTHER SACRED SPOTS

The following are the details of the holy tanks, wells, etc.,extant in Varanasi during the nineteenth century.

Amrita Kunda[120] (Well of immortality) : This was situated within the Vriddhakala Temple. The water of this reservoir, which was a few feet deep and unclean, was believed to have properties that would heal skin diseases.

Dhanwantari Kunda[121] (Named after Dhanwantari, the legendary

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physician) : This was near the Vriddhakala Temple. The mineral spring water of this well was used both for drinking and bathing, as well as a treatment for skin diseases. Those who were sick would first bathe in the Amrita Kunda and then again in the waters of the Dhanwantari Kunda.

Kurukshetra Talao[122] (Named after the legendary site of the Mahabharata War) : This tank, which was square in shape and had stairs made of stone, was situated to the east of the Durga Kunda. It was constructed by Rani Bhavani of Bengal around the middle of the eighteenth century.

Kalakupa (Well of fate)[123] : This was by the side of Dandapani Temple. The rays of the sun fell upon the waters of the well at noon, when interested persons would visit this place to trace their shadows upon the water. It was believed that for any participant failing to do so, death was inevitable within a period of six months.

Kapalamochana Kunda (Popularly known as Bhairo ki Talao)[124] : This tank, near Lat Bhairo, was a strong, well-built structure and its stairs and foundations were of solid stone.

Karkotaka Naga Tirtha (Popularly known as Nag Kuan)[125a] : This well, named after Karkotaka Naga,[125b] was situated in the mahalla named after it[125c] near Ausan Ganj Mahalla. This well was fairly old and had steep stone stairs in the form of a square and a broad wall six or seven feet thick. Beneath the water there was a sheet of iron that constituted the door to a still deeper well. One Chief extensively repaired the well in 1825, and later, James Prinsep also repaired it.

Ghantakarna Hrad[126a] (Popularly known as Karnaghanta Talao) : This tank, named after Ghantakarna, was situated in the mahalla of the same name.[126b] The tank was in a shape of quadrangle. A platform was extended around the enclosure from which stone stairs led down to water level.[126c]

Kashi Karwat Well[127] : This well, not mentioned in the *Kashi Khandam*, was situated near Adi Vishweshwara Temple. Anyone desirous of touching the holiest part of the well had to tread a passage leading down to the water. It was closed by the Government because the occasional ardent devotee would attempt self-sacrifice by jumping to its depths. At the appeal of the attending priests the Government recanted and allowed it to open on every Monday.

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Jnanavapi[128] (The well of knowledge) : Located near Vishwanatha Temple. People believed the tradition that Shiva was residing in the well and would offer flowers, water, etc., as offerings in honour of the deity.

Over this well there was a low-roofed colonnade of forty stone pillars in four rows. The structure, erected by Baiji Bai, widow of Daulat Rao Sindhia of Gwalior in 1828, was small, but beautifully designed. To the east of the colonnade was a large bull (Nandi) made of stone about seven feet in height dedicated to Shiva. This bull was a gift from the Raja of Nepal.

Gauri Kunda (or Harapapa Tirtha) : This kunda, or well, was situated at the base of Kedareshwara Temple in the shape of a parallelogram. Its waters were believed to have the virtue of removing three kinds of fever.

Chandra Tirtha[129] (Popular as Chandra Kupa, or Well of the Moon) : This well, dedicated to the Lunar deity was near Sankata Devi Temple. On the day of the full moon in the month of *Chaitra*, pilgrims visited this place and poured offerings into it as a mark of reverence to Chandra. When the new moon occurred on a Monday, people would visit regarding this day as an auspicious one.

Dharma Tirtha or **Dharma Kupa**[130] (The well of dharma) : This deep well, with railings round its mouth, was located near Divodaseshwara Temple and Mir Ghat. The reservoir below was quadrangular and not circular like those of other wells, and it bore signs of great antiquity. A mahalla was named after it too.

Durga Kunda[131] : This sacred tank was situated by the side of Durga Temple, yet its waters bore no special religious appeal to pilgrims. The neighbouring people simply used its waters for domestic purposes. The adjoining mahalla was named after it.

Pishachamochana Kunda[132] (A bath in the tank would deliver one from a *pishacha*, a goblin.) : A large square tank having stone stairs on four sides, it was on the western outskirts of the City. Pishachamochana was considered to have the special power of delivering one from the influence of evil spirits, preventing dreams of horror and removing sickness. It was obligatory for all pilgrims coming to the City, and residents as well, to visit this holy spot and bathe in the tank once a year. Again, all pilgrims proceeding to Gaya were to pay homage to this pishacha, whose head was carved in stone and seen at the top of the ghat.

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Gopal Das Sahu, a famous *shroff* of Varanasi, erected the eastern portion of the ghat around 1780, and one Mircha Bai completed the remaining portion around the same time. Balwant Rao Bakira erected the ghat to the west of the tank as well as the tower rising above it, while Mirza Khurrum Shah, a Mughal Prince of Delhi residing in Varanasi, built the wall on the same side around the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Raja Muralidhar erected another ghat to the north in the 1760s. Part of the ghat to the south (fairly old) was erected by one Raja Shiva Shankar around the sixteenth century, with yet another section built by Vinayak Rao around 1860. The adjoining Pishachmochan Mahalla was named after the tank.

Varkari Kunda[133] (Named after Bakari, a goat) : Though the tank was in existence, it was not visited by Hindus since it was owned by Muslims.

Matsyodari Tirtha[134a] (The Kunda which looked like the belly of a fish.) : This tirtha was situated by the site of Kameshwara Temple and lay within the mahalla named after it.[134b] This tank, an extensive *jhil*, once had a direct link with the Ganga. When the link was lost, the waters of the Matsyodari and Ganga overflowed their banks during the rainy season and entered Rani Bhavani's well near Omkareshwara Temple.[134c] On sanitary grounds, the waters of the tank were mostly drained out by James Prinsep around 1825. Consequently, it barely survived.[134d]

Mani Kunda[135] : This was situated in Nagnatha Mahalla and was filled up at the time of the construction of Streathfield Road there.

Manasa Tirtha, or **Manasarovara**[136a] : Situated near Mansarovar Ghat, it was a deep tank but is now totally lost. The adjoining mahalla and the nearby ghat on the Ganga were named after this tank.[136b]

Shamba Kunda (Popularly known as Surya Kunda or Suraj Kunda) : A large tank, it had originally consisted of twelve wells, but only two of these were traceable. It was situated in the south-west side of the City.[137]

Rudra Sarovara[138] (Popularly known as Rudrasar) : This *sarovara*, dedicated to Shiva, was a small tank situated near Dashashwamedh Ghat. People bathing in the Ganga at Dashashwamedh Ghat, would also take baths in the tank, as this tank was also believed to share in the sanctity of the place. This holy tank is lost today.

Shankudhara[139a] (Also Shankhadhara) : Named after the deity, Shankukarneshwara Shiva, it was also called Dwaraka Tirtha. A mahalla was named after this tank.[139b]

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Lolarka[140a] (Known as Lolarka Kuan) : Dedicated to the Sun-god, the well was situated in the vicinity of Durga Kunda. It had a double entrance, though the water was in one reservoir. Two stone shafts of the well, differing both in form and in size, were surrounded by two parapets, between which ran a walking path. Rani Ahalya Bai, Amrit Rao Peshwa and Raja Lakshminarayan of Coochbehar, Bengal, all made contributions to this grand construction.[140b]

Mahalakshmi Kunda[141] (Popularly known as Lakshmi Kunda) : It was situated by the side of Maha Lakshmi Temple near the present Luxa (Lakshmi) Mahalla.

Kapila Hrad (Kapildhara) : Visit to this very old holy tank, associated with the name of Kapila, the heavenly cow, formed a part of the *panchakroshi yatra*, and was considered as 'efficacious as a pilgrimage to Gaya'.

Kulastambha[142] (Popularly known as Lat Bhairo, the tall and lofty pillar of Kalabhairava) : This holy, tall pillar standing on a terrace near Kapalamochana Kunda was broken by Muslims during a serious communal disturbance in 1809 and was reduced to only seven or eight feet in height. It was covered with a copper sheet. Afterwards the *Lat* was carefully watched over by the attendant-priests. According to the Purana, Kalabhairava, the deified magistrate of the City, would punish people committing sins in Kashi at this place.

Charana Paduka (Upon Manikarnika Ghat)[143] : It was a large round slab in the middle of which stood a stone pedestal. The top of the pedestal was inlaid with marble in the centre of which there were two small flat objects symbolizing the two feet of Lord Vishnu. In the month of *Kartik*, people who held Paduka in high esteem would visit.

Charana Paduka (At Adi Keshava Temple)[144] : It was placed on a small platform erected on the ghat below.

WORSHIP OF THE VIRAS—THE DEMIGODS AND LOCAL HEROES

Varanasi was also remarkable as a site of the *Vira* worship, the worship of idols of popular inventions, which had no scriptural reference, but might have had associations with *Yaksha* worship of the non-Aryans and in some cases with local heroes. We find reference to Viras in the different lists of mahallas extant during the period under review, some of which were named after such Viras, but details are few.

We have listed below those Viras whose names have been traced hitherto and which might have been extant in the City during our period :

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(1) Ahiavira or Ehiavira in Dashashwamedh
(2) Ahiavira or Ehiavira in Ramapura
(3) Deoriavira or Douriavira
(4) Mahallanath
(5) Mamadeo
(6) Baḍaji
(7) Lahuravira in Lahuravir Mahalla
(8) Deonath in Deonathpura
(9) Baluavira
(10) Yogivira near Bakariya Kunda
(11) Bhojuvira

As was just mentioned, information is scarce, but we have included this piece of data regarding Yogivira (number ten above) :

Yogivira's seat was a small round structure where a devotee was reported to have buried himself alive. The structure was made of earth, though on the top there was a hollow circular stone. The exterior surface of the stone was divided into sixteen equal sections with each section exhibiting the figure of a man.

WORSHIP OF SATI

In addition to the deities already mentioned, there were also the deities of *Sati*.* Sometimes figures of Sati were placed at the same sites that were associated with them. Two stone Sati figures were placed in the temple enclosure of Vriddhakala and two Sati in bass-relief were placed upon a square pedestal in a corner of an alley leading to Baḍa Ganesha Temple in Ausan Ganj Mahalla. Such slabs containing the deities of Sati were highly venerated by the people, especially by the women of the City.

VARANASI, CENTRE OF YOGA AND TANTRA

Varanasi, being the City of Shiva—held as the Lord of Yogis and given prime status in Tantra,[145] developed as a unique centre of both Yoga and Tantra. Here the existence of the Tantric deities like Kali, Tara, Mahalakshmi and Shiva, and the legendary burning ghats like Manikarnika Ghat, facilitated Tantric practices. Moreover, the highly spiritual atmosphere of the City, including the presence of spiritual giants like Trailanga Swami, who was both a Yogi and a Tantric, and Baba

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* See Chapter V for details.

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Kinaram, a Tantric, was highly conducive to the practice of both Tantra and Yoga. This attracted aspirants on those paths to Varanasi from all over India during this period, just as it had in the past.

THE INSTITUTION OF SADHUS

As far as Hinduism was concerned, almost all the Christian missionaries and many Western travellers centred their attacks on five principal things. These were the deities, *pandas* (temple priests and religious guides), Brahmins, *sadhus* (ascetics) and the scriptures. They described with a note of contempt how sadhus of unclean appearance sat or stood in peculiar postures, or roamed alone or in large companies in the City, and led an idle life. Sadhus were looked upon by these people as parasites of society. This view of the sadhu was also shared by some westernized Indians like Bholanauth Chunder, the author of *The Travels of a Hindoo*. But the people, in general, held them in high esteem.

This holy City, with its religious associations and spiritual vibrations, posed a perennial source of inspiration and held a very special attraction for sadhus, while the sadhus, in turn, would pervade the City with their saintliness. The impact of sadhus fell especially on Hindus to a marked degree. In the City, they witnessed such saints as Trailanga Swami, and they experienced in these exemplary lives the highest spiritual truths as postulated by the scriptures. Consequently, this strengthened the people's belief in their own religion despite fierce criticism of Hinduism from persons belonging to other faiths or those not having any faith in God.

People received direct spiritual services from sadhus in the form of initiation, religious instruction and discourse. Again, examples of the removal of people's physical sufferings by these men exercising powers of Yoga were also not lacking.

Swadhyaya, or study of the scriptures, forms an integral part of the life of the sadhu and there were many among them who would undertake the study of scriptures with all seriousness in addition to their spiritual practices. Moreover, monks like Swami Vishuddhananda distinguished themselves in different fields of learning .

It was this institution of the sadhu that had also helped Hindus offer a spiritual front to resist the designs of the Muslim fanatics, who endeavoured to undermine Hinduism in the City, and then again to thwart the designs of Christian missionaries who tried to conquer Varanasi for Christianity, and also face, successfully, the challenges of Western

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materialism. This forms one of the great historic services that sadhus rendered to Hinduism.

All these contributed to a growth of reverence and respect among the people towards sadhus, leading to their greater influence over society than that of the wealthy or others within the influential hierarchy, such as priests and pandits.

Examples of temporal pursuits by sadhus or the less than cordial relations among those belonging to different sects sometimes undermined the dignity of the sadhus in the eyes of the people. Such instances were not, in fact, frequent, and sadhus, as a class, continued to be regarded as worthy of respect and honour.

THE MATHS

The *maths*, that is, monasteries belonging to various sects and sub-sects of Hinduism, had long been the living places of holy men and neophytes leading a disciplined life of devotion to spiritual practices, study of scriptures, and the taking part in daily services and occasional celebrations. There was great variation among these monasteries regarding religious faith, the number of inmates, wealth, and the number of devotees and visitors. While some monasteries were rather affluent and ostentatious, there were also a good number that were absolutely austere both in character and in appearance.

Almost all the major religious sects and sub-sects of India had maths in the City. For example, followers of Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabha, Nimbarka, Shri Chaitanya, Ramananda, Gorakhnath, Dadu Dayal, Nanak, Kabir, Kinaram and even the Vira Shaivas of South India had maths in Varanasi.[146]

These monasteries, generally, had both moveable and immovable properties (fixed and non-fixed assets) donated by devotees. But the enthusiastic members of some monasteries, like the Gosain merchants, enhanced their properties, constructed palatial buildings and amassed great wealth by starting money-lending businesses and in other ways. Court cases regarding properties held by monasteries were not uncommon. Persistant temporal pursuits by some led to undesirable consequences including disgrace in the public eye.[147] On the other hand, however, the vast majority of monasteries were held in great veneration by the people for their genuine spiritual character. Community services provided by these monasteries were restricted mainly to spiritual issues.

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According to one report, there were as many as fourteen hundred maths in the City in the 1770s.[148] Below is a list of a few relatively old and famous monasteries which were in existence during our period of study.

Baḍa Guḍaji Math : Possibly founded in the early seventeenth century, it was situated near Asi and occupied by the Vaishnavite *Vairagis*. It was supported mainly by the Maharaja of Rewa.[149]

Chhoti Guḍaji Math : Also near Asi, this was a comparatively smaller institution than the above. Founded in the eighteenth century, it was also occupied by Vaishnavite Vairagis, and was supported by public charity.[150]

Panditji Math : Founded in around 1845 by one Tika Das, it sheltered Brahmin monks and was maintained from the incomes of land in Arrah and Dwarbhanga. Both religious and secular education was imparted here.[151]

Vishnupanthi Math : Again near Asi, it was founded by Ramanuja, the celebrated exponent of the Qualified Monism School of Vedanta. It was one of the oldest monasteries of the City and the inmates subsisted on alms.[152]

Dadupanthi Math : A monastery of the followers of Dadu Dayal, one of the great mediaeval saints, it was founded in the early seventeenth century.[153]

Juna Math : Situated at Hanuman Ghat, it had been the living place of the Nagas. This celebrated monastery had income from its lands and also would receive substantial donations, especially from the chiefs of different states.[154]

Nirbani Math : Situated at Shivala Ghat, it was also a famous monastery accommodating the Nagas. It was possibly established in the early seventeenth century.[155]

Niranjani Math : Also belonging to the Nagas, it too was situated at Shivala Ghat and was likewise possibly founded in the early seventeenth century.[156]

Pachaiti Kalan Math : Belonging to the Nanakshahi Udasi sect, this math was located in Bhadaini. It was founded around 1790 by Nanak Ram, an officer in the Nizam's service, who left his property for its maintenance.[157]

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Melaram Math : Founded by Melaram, a yogi, near Durga Kunda around 1860, Melaram was reported to have allowed its members to marry.[158]

Kinaram Math : This well-known monastery at Krimi Kunda was established by the followers of Kinaram, a Tantrik *avadhuta* of high order, who passed away in the City in 1772. His followers, known as *Aghoris*, followed a special mode of spiritual practice, developed on the line of Tantra.[159]

Baḍi Sangat Akhaḍa : This monastery belonged to the Sikhs and was founded in honour of Tegh Bahadur, the third Sikh Guru.[160]

Gorakhnath ki Tila : Belonging to the Nath sect, founded by the celebrated saint Goraknath, this was a fairly old math, maintained by the Rajasthani princes and located near Maidagin Garden.[161]

Aparnath Math : Tracing its origin to Aparnath, the great yogi of the Nath sect and a contemporary of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor, this monastery was situated near Dhundhiraj.[162]

Nimbarka Kot : Situated in Chowkhamba, this was the headquarters of the Nimbarka sect.[163]

Gopal Mandir : This famous temple was situated at Chowkhamba and was the centre of the followers of Vallabhacharya.[164]

Visvaradhya Math : This belonged to the Lingayets of South India and was also fairly old.[165]

Jangambaḍi Math : This famous old monastery was situated in a mahalla with the same name and belonged to the Jangamas of South India who were Shaivites. It was especially resorted to by South Indian pilgrims who also maintained it. The Math had in its possession a Mughal imperial *farman* from Emperor Aurangzeb, who had granted the Math a vast property.[166]

Ramananda Math : Situated at the Panchaganga Ghat, it belonged to the followers of Ramananda.[167]

Kabir Chaura Math : This famous old monastery in the Kabir Chaura Mahalla was the main seat of the Kabirpanthis, followers of Kabir, the renowned mediaeval saint of Varanasi.

Rajguru Sumeru Math : Among all the above-mentioned monasteries, this Math, also known as Paduka Math of Ganesh Mahalla,

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was possibly the oldest. It is said to have been founded by Shankaracharya, himself, and is affiliated to Sumeru Math of Dwaraka. Raja Mahipnarain of Varanasi took initiation from Swami Swayamprakashananda, the forty-sixth mohant of this Math. Hence, it was called Rajguru Math. Moreover, the padukas (shoes) of Shankaracharya and all the mohants since 827 A.D. were said to have been preserved here. Hence, it was also called Paduka Mandira.[168]

THE WANDERING SADHUS

In addition to the monks living in an ashrama or monastery, there were many holy men who lived and roamed independently. Many of these ascetics could be seen in front of the big temples[169] in principal streets of the City,[170] or along the riverbank.[171] They especially thronged around the Manikarnika Ghat[172] and were of different descriptions. Some of them wore only a *kaupina* (loin cloth) or the skin of a tiger or a black antelope with horns. Some had long beards and matted locks and were besmeared with ashes.[173] Some were *Avadhutas* or the *Urdhabahus* with one of their hands lifted over their heads.[174] Some of them had distorted limbs owing to their practice of penance in keeping their legs or hands in the same position for extended periods.[175]

An Urdhabahu, for example, had vowed to keep his right arm in a vertical position above his head for a certain length of time. But when the term of probation had expired, the arm remained fixed, and consequently, he could no longer use it, the sinews were shrunk, the limbs had withered and the nails, which had been clenched throughout the penance, had grown to an enormous length quite through the hand. His hair was long, matted and filled with filth, his beard tangled and thick with the accumulation of years covered his chest, which was covered with ashes and the like.[176]

Sometimes ascetics were seen floating down the Ganga and on rare occasions spotted feeding upon a corpse.[177] These were said to have belonged to the Aghori sect.[178] An eye-witness recorded that sadhus sitting over the Manikarnika Ghat were fed by householders, either carrying food to them or taking them home. If not fed in this way, the mendicant sadhus had to beg themselves and live on *madhukari*.[179] Interestingly enough, in some cases, the sadhus were reported to have received some support from the British Government in the form of a grant of land or small provisions. For example, the Urdhabahu referred to above,and one Prakashananda Brahmachari received such support from the Government.[180]

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It appears from the study of different sources that the sadhus living independently and roaming throughout the City consisted mainly of those belonging to the *Shaiva* sects, including *Dandis*, *Dashanamis*, *Yogis*, *Paramahamsas*, *Aghoris*, *Urdhabahus*, *Akashamukhis*, *Nakhis*, *Gadaras*, *Rukharas*, *Sukharas*, *Ukharas*, *Karalingis*, *Brahmacharins*, *Avadhutas* and *Nagas*.[181]

Though there were ascetics belonging to the sects of the Vaishnavas and the Jainas in the City, references to their living on madhukari and leading independent lives at ghats and such other public places are rare. This was so perhaps because the City was the centre mainly of the Shaivas, and other sects did not receive as much attention from the public as did the Shaivas.

The ascetics living here did not confine themselves only to the boundaries of the City, but many among them travelled to other places extensively. Here are given two interesting and adventurous accounts of ascetics living in the City in 1792. One of them was an Urdhabahu, one who always raises his hand above his head, and the other was practising the penance of *sharashaya*, or always lying on a bed of spikes. These accounts show how they embraced the life of renunciation, the special forms of religious practice they were initiated into, and also give details of their extensive travels both in and outside India.[182]

The Urdhabahu in our account was a 'very intelligent' man called Purana Puri or Pran Puri.[183] He was born in Kanauj and belonged to a Rajput tribe. At the age of nine, he secretly withdrew from his house and proceeded to the City of Bithur on the bank of the Ganga where he became an ascetic. He went to Allahabad to the annual meeting of pilgrims where, upon hearing of the merits attached to what he described as 'the eighteen different kinds of *tapasya*,' he made the choice to become an Urdhabahu.

The first exercises of this tapasya were extremely painful and he realized that it required step-by-step preparation. Occasionally pausing from these spiritual practices, he decided to visit Rameshwar, and then Kalpi, and Ujjaini, Berhampur, Aurangabad, Elora, Poona, Sattara, Srirangapattam, Cochin, Puri, Ceylon, Malay, Multan, Haridwar, the upper parts of Punjab, Kabul, Khorasan, Herat, Daghestan, Astrachan, Moscow, Persia, Ispahan, Bahrain and Bussorah. From Surat, he again proceeded to Mecca. He then returned to India arriving on the west coast. During these journeys, he was reported to have found some Hindus in Mecca and met the famous Ahmed Shah Abdali.

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Pran Puri also went to Nepal and Tibet. In the capital of Tibet, he was charged by the administration there to hand over some dispatches to Warren Hastings, the Governor-General of India. Urdhabahu admitted to having delivered the dispatches in the presence of Barwell and others. Next he came to Varanasi with letters of introduction to Raja Chet Singh and to Graham, who was a resident of the City at that time. Some years later, Hastings bestowed upon him a *jageer*, the village of Asapoor, which he continued to hold as a free tenure. Yet, he had become so fond of travelling that he annually made short excursions into different parts of India and occasionally went as far as Nepal.

The second ascetic, Prakashananda Brahmachari, whose ancestors originally belonged to Punjab, took the title of *Parama Swatantra*, meaning master of self-possession or independence.[184] He used to live day and night on a *sharashaya*, or bed of spikes. To add to what he considered extra merit to this state of mortification, in hot weather he often burnt logs around him, and in the cold season he had a perforated water pot placed in a frame at some height above him to keep him wet. Yet, he seemed contented and enjoyed good health and spirits. Nor did the spikes appear to be particularly painful to him, even though he did not even have the defense ordinary clothing would have provided. On being asked why he undertook this penance, he answered that Agnibarna, Ravana and Bhishma had recourse to such penance in the Ages of *Satya*, *Treta* and *Dwapara* respectively, and that he had been pursuing their examples in the age of *Kali* for the last thirty-five years for the highest bliss and not to expiate any crime or offence. 'If I am guilty,' he exclaimed, 'may Vishweshwara (Lord Shiva) make me a leper here in Varanasi !' References are available which reveal that there were other sadhus who slept on beds of spikes, not at all times, but only at night.[185]

Following is the statement of Prakashananda, rendered into English from Hindi, which throws more light on his personal life in addition to what has been already said :

> 'I am a Brahmin of the Yajurveda sect, and of the line of the sage Parashara. My ancestors are from Punjab. They had, a long time ago, come to vist Jagannath (in Puri) and had reached Gopegawn where I was born. When I was only ten years of age, I used to give myself up to meditation and mortification, lying upon thorns and pebbles, a mode of life I had continued for ten years. Then it was interrupted by some relations who wanted me to think of marriage, whereupon, having attained to twenty years of age, I left my home determined to devote myself to travelling.'

He then visited Nepal, Tibet, Manas Sarovar and Kashmir, and in

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course of his travels he met one Raja Bhenda Singh of a place near Peshawar. About his penance he said :

> 'I had shut myself up in a *gowpha* (cave) where I vowed to remain doing penance for a period of twelve years. Vermin or worms gnawed my flesh, of which the marks still remain and when one year had elapsed, the Raja opened the door of the cave whereupon I said to him, "Either take my curse, or make me a *sharashaya* (bed of spikes)," and then that Raja made the sharashaya I now occupy.
>
> In Surat I embarked in a vessel, and went by sea to Muscat in twelve days, and thence returning, came to Surat again. Mr. Boddam was then at Surat and he afterwards went to Bombay. I stayed two years at Surat. Mr. Boddam granted me something to subsist on with my followers and built a house for me and still *chelas* (disciples) are there.... I have been at every place of religious resort and have no longer any inclination to roam, but being desirous of settling in Varanasi, I have come hither.'[186]

Though there must have been many other widely travelled ascetics like Prana Puri and Prakashananda in the City, we know almost nothing about them. Below we shall furnish information about some other holy men of our period, who rose to eminence either for their asceticism, outstanding scholarship or both.

DISTINGUISHED ASCETICS

Trailanga Swami (Ganapati Saraswati) : Among all the ascetics of Varanasi during this period, the most illustrious was Ganapati Saraswati of the Dashanami sect, popularly called Tailanga Swami or Trailanga Swami, on account of his emergence from Telengana, Andhra Pradesh . His biographers and even his disciples differ on his date of birth and the period of his longevity. One disciple-biographer fixed his year of birth at 1529,[187] while another source attributed it to 1607.[188] From the accounts of the former,[189] it is known that Shivarama, his pre-monastic name, was born in Holia at Vizianagaram in Andhra Pradesh to a well-to-do family. His parents were Narashingha Rao and Vidyavati Devi and both were devoted to Shiva. At the age of forty, Shivaram, who remained a bachelor and was devoted to spiritual practices, renounced the world once and for all after the passing away of his parents and lived the life of a recluse in a cottage near a cremation ground. There, after a twenty-year *sadhana*, he met his preceptor Bhagirathananda Saraswati in 1679, who hailed from Punjab. Bhagirathananda initiated Shivaram into *sannyasa* and named him Ganapati Saraswati in 1685. Then Ganapati led a life of severe austerties and visited many places on pilgrimage, reaching Prayag in 1733, and, finally, settling inVaranasi in 1737.

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In Varanasi, till his *mahasamadhi* (passing away) in 1887, he lived at different places such as Asi Ghat, the Vedavyas Ashram at Hanuman Ghat, Dashashwamedh Ghat, and finally in the courtyard of the small abode of one Mangal Das Bhatta, a devoted Maharashtrian, at the Panchaganga Ghat, where a huge block of stone lying under the sky was his resting place. The Swami, who had a remarkably imposing figure, was often found roaming the streets or the ghat carefree as a child. Sometimes the Swami, who was also a great lover of the Ganga, was observed swimming or floating on its waters for hours. The Swami talked very little and at times not at all.

A large number of people became attracted to him upon hearing of his exercise of a yogic power to ameliorate sufferings. His observance of silence and the spending of considerable time in the Ganga both brought him some relief from encountering the entreaties of the people. The Swami had taken the vow of *ayachaka*, or non-seeking, and remaining satisfied with whatever he received. In the later stage of his stay in the City, his fame as a great yogi spread all over India, especially, in Bengal,[190] and pilgrims visited him in multitudes. During his last days, he took up *ajagaravritti*,[191] meaning sitting still without any movement, and devotees poured water on him from early in the morning till noon irrespective of summer or winter, looking upon him as a living incarnation of Shiva.[192] He had scheduled his date of passing away beforehand and accordingly entered into mahasamadhi on Monday evening, December 26, 1887, *Poush Shukla Ekadashi* of B.S. 1294, at the age of two hundred and eighty years.[193] His body was given *salilasamadhi* in the Ganga, according to the funeral custom of the monks of the Dashanami sect, in the presence of a mourning multitude of onlookers standing on the ghats.[194]

A modern mind might question the authenticity of the Swami's demonstration of his yogic powers, the descriptions of which are abundant in his biographies, as well as harbour doubts on the possibility of such a long life. But according to the science of yoga, neither the attainment of occult powers nor the living of an exceptionately long life is at all impossible.[195] The real point is whether the Swami was a yogi and whether all the incidents to which his name has been associated actually took place. Though the details of his life cannot be verified today after so many years, that he was a yogi of the highest order has been acknowledged by a number of spiritual luminaries, the greatest of whom was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.[196]

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During his visit to the City in 1868,[197] Sri Ramakrishna, having personally observed his movements and other signs, such as the physique of the Swami through his deep spiritual insight came to the conclusion that the Swami had achieved the state of *Paramahamsa*. He used to speak of the Swami as '*Sakshat Vishwanath*,' a veritable image of Shiva.[198] Sri Ramakrishna held Trailanga Swami in the highest esteem among all whom he met in Varanasi.

Sri Ramakrishna, himself, gave a lively account of his visit with the Swami at the Manikarnika Ghat :

> 'I saw that the universal Lord Himself was using his body as a vehicle for manifestation. Kashi was illumined by his stay there. He was in an exalted state of knowledge. There was no body-consciousness in him. Sand there became so hot in the sun that no one could set foot on it. But he lay comfortably on it. I cooked rice porridge, took it with me to him and fed him with it. He did not speak then, as he had taken a vow to remain silent. I asked him by a sign whether *Ishwara* was one or more. In reply he hinted that when one was in *samadhi*, one knew Him as one, otherwise, as long as there was the knowledge of diversity, such as "I," "you," the *jiva*, the universe, etc., He was many. Pointing at him I said to Hridu (a nephew of Sri Ramakrishna), "This is what is called the true state of Paramahamsa." '[199]

Innumerable incidents in the life of the Swami substantiated that he was a perfect master of his senses. He remained equipoised and blissful in both pleasure and pain, and occasionally entered deep samadhi. He also had a compassionate heart for the afflicted.[200] In fact, his sympathy for the distressed was proverbial and he sometimes exercised his much-talked-about yogic power to grant relief to people in distress. Thus, it was evident that he had all the symptoms of a realized soul of the highest order.[201] He was a *jnani*, a yogi and a great *bhakta*; installing images of Shiva and Kali in his last place of residence near Panchaganga Ghat.[202]

Bees flock around the flower when it blossoms. People of all descriptions, from all over India, were drawn to the Swami and felt blessed in his presence. Among the celebrated visitors who called on him to either pay homage, get inspiration or both, were no less than the eminent spiritual personages of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda,*[203] Swami Bhaskarananda, Swami Vishuddhananda Saraswati, Yogi Shyamacharan Lahiri and Mahatma Vijaykrishna Goswami.

Trailanga Swami's profound spirituality added glory to the spiritual tradition of the holy City of Varanasi. His life had a special significance in the religious history of the City in the sense that it authenticated the truths enjoined in the Hindu scriptures about realized souls. He had a limited

* Swami Vivekananda must have visited Varanasi and met Trailanga Swami there before December 26, 1887, when the latter passed away.

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group of initiated disciples which comprised of both sannyasis and householders,[204] but gave spiritual inspiration and solace to innumerable souls.[205]

Fortunately, some of the teachings of Trailanga Swami have been recorded and included in the authentic biography of the Swami written by Umacharan Mukhopadhyay, one of his disciples. The following extract from the spiritual instructions has been recorded in the form of a dialogue between the Guru and his disciple :

Disciple: Who saves us from *samsara* ?
Guru: Ishwara.
D: What is bondage?
G: Attachment to the world.
D: What is liberation?
G: Renunciation of the world and absorption in God.
D: What is hell?
G: Our own body.
D: What is heaven?
G: After attaining the state of desirelessness, this world itself is transformed into heaven.
D: How can one attain liberation?
G: Through spiritual knowledge.
D: Who is man's enemy?
G: His own senses.
D: Who is man's friend?
G: His controlled senses.
D: Who is poor?
G: One who is very greedy.
D: Who is a rich?
G: One who always remains content.
D: What is Maya?
G: Too much attachment.
D: What is our chronic disease?
G: *Samsara*—attachment to the evanescent world.
D: What is the medicine?
G: Detachment.
D: Which is the greatest place of pilgrimage?
G: Our own pure mind.
D: What is worth hearing?
G: Vedantic truth from the Guru.
D: How can one attain the knowledge of *Brahman* ?

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G: Through holy company.
D: Who is a Sadhu?
G: One who is free from attachment and delusion.[206]

Hariharananda Tirtha Swami, a native of the Bengal village of Palpaḍa near Sukhsagar, was born in 1762. His pre-monastic name was Nanda Kumar Vidyalankar. He was a great scholar of Tantra and Nyaya and he also had a commendable power of oration. Though he had been married, he renounced hearth and home, took sannyasa and was called Hariharananda Tirtha Swami Kulabadhut. He visited many places and spent the last twenty years of his life in Varanasi, where he initiated many people. He had a close relationship with Raja Rammohan Ray who was said to have learnt Tantra from him. During the later part of his life, he composed *Kularnaba Tantra*, a commentary on the *Mahanirvana Tantra*. A letter criticizing the custom of *Sati* was published in the India Gazette in 1819 in the name of Hariharananda. The Swami passed away in 1832 at the age of seventy.[207]

Swami Devatirtha, alias Kashthajihva Swami, or the wooden-tongued Swami,[208] was one of those great monks of the City who distinguished themselves in both fields of spirituality and scholarship in the nineteenth century. He was also proficient in music and the composition of poems. His pre-monastic name was Vishweshwar Datta Mishra. Initiated into sannyasa by Vidyaranya Tirtha in the City, Maharaj Ishwarinarain Singh, the Kashi Naresh, was his chief patron. The Swami wrote extensively both in Sanskrit and in Hindi.[209]

Swami Mahadevananda, or Ramniranjan Swami, was a contemporary of Kashthajihva Swami, and, like him, also became renowned as a monk and a scholar. His pre-monastic name was Ramniranjan Mishra. He was born in 1785 and renounced the world taking monastic vows in 1825, when he was about forty years old. He lived in Gau Ghat and became known as *Gaughat ke Swamiji*, that is, the monk living at Gau Ghat. He attracted a large number of devotees and admirers among whom there were both commoners and nobles like Maharaj Ishwarinarain. The Swami passed away in 1870.

Magniram Brahmachari emerged as a great scholar of Vedanta in the City in the later half of the nineteenth century. He took sannyasa afterwards. One of his famous students of Vedanta was Swami Vitaragananda. Magniram was living in the City as late as the 1910s.[210]

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Swami Vitaragananda[211] hailed from the City of Jaipur and belonged to the Dashanami sect. He was educated in Varanasi by Magniram Brahmachari mentioned above. Later on, he renounced the world and received Sannyasa from Gangadhar Saraswati in Uttarkashi. In the second half of the nineteenth century, he again came to the City and took instructions from Swami Vishuddhananda. He also visited Niranjan Swami of Gaughat. In the later stage of his life, he lived in the village of Banpurwa, four miles from Asi, where he passed away at the age of nearly one hundred and fifty years.

Yogi Bala Shastri Datar[212] was born in 1900 V. S.* in a Maratha family of the City. He was a renowned scholar and also a great Yogi.

Ranachhoḍ Das, also known as Satua Baba, was a Vaishnava saint who came to the City in 1828 from Kathiawar of Gujarat. He founded a Math on the Manikarnika Ghat and had many disciples.

Harikuwar, or Maji Baba[213] was reported to be the only illustrious female ascetic of the City around 1860. Well versed in the Vedas and Yoga, she was called 'Gargi', after the celebrated female scholar of the Vedic Age, by the people for her erudition. She was a disciple of Swami Sachchidananda of Anandaguha.

Kela Brahmachari (1855)[214] was originally a resident of the Balia district in Uttar Pradesh. He belonged to the Vaishnava sect and lived only on fruit. He managed to maintain about 350 scholars by begging and his Math was situated on the Manmandir Ghat.

Baba Tikamdas (1800-1937)[215] was a Vaishnava saint and used to reside at Kamachchha at the insistence of Maharaj Ishwarinarain Singh.

Siddha Giri[216] emerged in the eighteenth century as a renowned monk. He lived on the Lalita Ghat.

Swami Satguru Dayal[217] was a great Tantrik Yogi who lived at Gadhwa Ghat (in a cave) near the Asi confluence around 1850.

Gosai Dinadayal Giri[218] was born in 1802 in Varanasi and was a celebrated monk of the Dashanami sect of the nineteenth century. He was also a prolific writer in Hindi. He lived in the Gaughat Mahalla.

Paramananda Swami,[219] was a Paramahamsa Sadhu and a scholar

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* Vikram Sambat

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found living in a hermitage at the site of the Kadambeshwara Shiva on the Panchakroshi route, about five miles from Durga Kunda in the 1850s.

Basudevananda Tirtha Swami[220] was a Bengalee ascetic of the Dashanami sect. He belonged to the Raj Guru Shankar Sumeru Math and became its *Mahant* in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was a great scholar of Vedanta and his commentaries on Vedanta are still preserved in that Math. He initiated a number of people including many pandits. He was also made the *Acharya* (President) of the *Sannyasimandal* (a society of ascetics) during his time.

Tarak Brahmananda Saraswati, alias, Gauḍa Swami[221], was from North India and a monk of the Dashanami sect. He lived in a Math constructed by Ahalya Bai over the Ahalya Bai Ghat. He was a profound scholar of Vedanta and a great *Rajayogi*. Swami Bishwarupananda and Swami Vishuddhananda were two of his well-known disciples. He passed away in 1859.

Swami Vishwarupananda[222] was also a great scholar of the Vedanta who belonged to the Dashanami sect. His preceptor was Gauḍapada and his disciple was Gangadhar Swami.

Swami Vishuddhananda's[223] father was a resident of the village of Baura in Uttar Pradesh, but he was married in Kalyani, Hyderabad, where Vishuddhananda was born in 1809. From his very boyhood, Vishuddhananda showed great intelligence and interest in his studies and later became renowned as one of the greatest scholars of Vedanta in his time. He renounced the world at an early age, became a monk of the Dashanami order and ultimately came to Varanasi in the early third quarter of the nineteenth century. There his preceptor, Gauḍa Swami, taught him Yoga, Mimamsa, and Vedanta.

After the passing away of Gauḍ Swami, Vishuddhananda became the head of the Math located at Ahalaya Bai Ghat. Soon he attracted a large number of spiritual aspirants and students around him and many of them, such as Bachha Jha of Dwarbhanga, Taracharan Tarkaratna of Bengal and his son, Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Sakharam and Kakaram Bhatta of Maharashtra, Nanuram of Bombay, Chetram of Rajasthan, Ambika Dutta Byas, Guruprasad of Lahore, Sevakram of Meerut, Swamiram Mishra, and Satyacharan earned fame for their erudition. Swami Vishuddhananda had great influence over many kings of the native states of Kashmir, Gwalior, Jaipur, Indore, Bundi, Dwarbhanga, who spent huge sums of money for

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the maintenance of *satras* and monasteries in the City. The Swami passed away in 1898.

Swami Bhaskarananda was born in the village of Maithelalpur in Uttar Pradesh in 1833 and belonged to the Dashanami sect. He came to the City in 1868 and afterwards began to live at Anandabag, the garden of the Raja of Amethi, and stayed there for a long time till his passing away.

The following is the Swami's recount about the circumstances leading to his living in the garden :

> 'When I was young, I visited many holy places and associated with many sadhus. I went on foot to the four important holy places (at the four corners of India, Kedar-Badri, Puri, Dwaraka and Rameshwaram).
>
> There were no railways then, and you can imagine what difficulties one had to undergo. But even though I practised such austerities, I gained very little; ignorance and sorrow were as deep as ever. Finally, I sat down here in this garden and resolved, "May God be realized or may this body die." Now, you see, I get a little abiding bliss.'[224]

He had great intimacy with Trailanga Swami. Bhaskarananda, a great Yogi and a scholar of Vedanta, was renowned as the Holy Man of Varanasi. His initiated disciples were many and among them there were men from both high and low strata of society, including a few notorious pandas of the City who were transformed by him. He was visited by Mark Twain, the famous American author, on February 4, 1896, who was greatly impressed by his spiritual personality. He passed away in 1899.

Harihar Swami[225] belonged to the *Ramait* sect. He emerged in the City in the second half of the nineteenth century and was popularly called Hariharbaba. He occasionally took instruction from Swami Vishuddhananda and was also close to Swami Vitaragananda. In the later part of his life, he lived in a boat at Asi Ghat and passed away sometime in the second quarter of twentieth century.

Amardas Udasi Maharaj[226] became known in the second half of the nineteenth century and belonged to the *Udasi* sect.

Kachchha Baba[227] emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Kharab Dasji[228] belonged to the *Aughad* (Avadhuta) sect and emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century. He used to live on the other side of the Ganga.

Chandrashekhar Dasji appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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Brahmananda Maharaj[229] appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. He composed devotional songs which left a transcendental effect upon the listeners.

Chameli Puri became known in the second half of the nineteenth century. Sri Saradamani Devi, consort of Sri Ramakrishna and herself a saint of high order, visited him towards the end of the nineteenth century and was impressed by his saintliness.

Swami Sachchidananda Paramahamsa lived in Ananda Guhā (cave) near Raj Ghat around 1850.[230]

DANDISWAMIS *vis-à-vis* DASHANAMI SANNYASIS

It is interesting to note that of these seven great spiritual personalities of the City—Trailanga Swami, Gauḍa Swami, Kashthajihva Swami, Ramnirajan Swami, Bhaskarananda Swami, Vishuddhananda Swami and Shyamacharan Lahiri—souls who were illuminating the spiritual sky of Varanasi like bright stars and influencing innumerable people—all, except Shyamacharan, a householder, were monks of the Dashanami sect. Again, among these monks, all, except Trailanga Swami, belonged to North India.

Till the first half of the nineteenth century, the Dandiswamis of South India exerted a great influence on the City for their superior knowledge of Vedic learning with its rituals. The people also regarded them as superior to other ascetics. But with the appearances of Gauḍa Swami and his illustrious disciple Swami Vishuddhananda, who belonged to the Dashanami sect, the situation started changing substantially in favour of the monks of the Dashanami sect. There is an anecdote that, when Gauḍa Swami, himself a Sanskrit scholar, prayed for initiation into sannyasa with the Dandis, he was unceremoniously refused and told he had no knowledge of the Vedas. Extremely humiliated at this, he left the City with the vow that he would not return toVaranasi until he learnt the Vedas thoroughly. He went to South India and learnt the Vedas (*Mantras*, *Brahamanas*, *Shrautasutras* and *Grihyasutras*) by heart. Afterwards, he returned and vanquished those Dandis who had turned down his prayer by the force of his knowledge of the Vedas.[231]

Swami Vishuddhananda would take part in the *shastrarthas* held both in and even outside the City with his disciples. The Swami's door was wide open to all—monks and brahmacharins, scholars and students, rich and poor, aristocrats and commoners. They placed before him diverse problems of religion and theology, as well as personal and social matters.

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These problems were sympathetically heard and judiciously solved by him. His spiritual height was best illustrated by the visits many ascetics, irrespective of sect, paid him. His successful participation in many *shastrarthas* demonstrated his high intellectual power. His influence over a number of native chiefs earned him a distinguished position in Varanasi and recognition as the leader of the *Santsamaj*, the local society of monks and scholars, as long as he lived. Thus, he was instrumental in bringing about a change of leadership from the Dandiswamis of the South to the Dashanami sannyasis of North India in the Santsamaj of the City.[232]

VISITING ASCETICS

Sri Ramakrishna

In addition to the holy men who settled in Varanasi there were still others who would visit on pilgrimage. These men also left a substantial impact on the City; as the Sanskrit saying goes, *Tirthi kurvanti tirthani*—holy men make places of pilgrimage. Among such ascetics undertaking pilgrimage to Varanasi in this age, the most illustrious is Sri Ramakrishna, whose visit bears paramount significance from a spiritual point of view.[233] Sri Ramakrishna first came sometime in 1863 on a pilgrimage about which very little is known. He revisited in 1868 and reached the place sometime in the first week of February with his chief patron, Mathuramohan Biswas, and his large party of 100 or more people.

During this second visit, Sri Ramakrishna and Mathuramohan stayed on for a period of five or six days and then set out for Prayag (Allahabad). In Varanasi, they first stayed with Kalinath Bapuli, a Bengali *rais* known as Raja Babu, and a personal friend of Mathuramohan, at Kalinath's residence in Kedar Ghat.[234] Either a few days just before leaving for Prayag or immediately upon returning, they moved on to a nearby rented house. A few days after returning from Prayag, they continued on to Vrindaban. Having returned from Vrindaban they waited in the City for some time in order to witness Lord Vishwanatha adorned in special dress and ornaments. Sri Ramakrishna also witnessed the golden image of Goddess Annapurna during this visit and finally returned to Calcutta with the party in May of 1868.

During his stay in Varanasi, as has already been mentioned, Sri Ramakrishna paid a visit to Trailanga Swami. He also verified here two equally popular religious beliefs of the Hindus, in accordance with scriptures, which had long prompted people to stay on and die in Varanasi

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and which ranked the City high among all the pilgrim-centres of Hindus. These religious beliefs were that Kashi is made of gold and that whosoever dies in Kashi gets liberated from the cycle of birth and death, by the grace of Lord Vishwanatha.

That this holy place of Varanasi transmitted such intensified spirituality to the sensitive soul of Sri Ramakrishna was witnessed by his companions. He went in a palanquin to pay obeisance to Lord Vishwanatha, the presiding deity of the City, everyday, his nephew Hriday accompanying him on foot. Even on the way to the Vishwanatha Temple he used to pass into *bhavasamadhi*, not to speak of his state of divine absorption when paying obeisance to the deity. He experienced ecstasy in all the temples he visited, especially Kedaranatha. As a matter of fact, at the time he entered Varanasi by boat he had the following vision :

> 'The city of Shiva was actually made of gold and there was actually nothing made of earth and stone there. It was indeed the manifestation, in the present, of the invaluable gold mass of spiritual emotions of the hearts of the holy devotees, accumulated stratum after stratum and solidified through ages, so to speak, into this City. That effulgent form, the embodiment of spiritual emotions, is its eternal nature. And what was seen outside was its shadow only !'[235]

On another occasion, Sri Ramakrishna, Mathur Babu and others were passing by the Manikarnika Ghat by boat. At that moment, the famous burning-ghat of the City was full of smoke rising from the funeral pyres of the dead. No sooner had Sri Ramakrishna cast his eyes in that direction than he was overwhelmed with joy, not that of ordinary morbid excitement, but that of total quietness, and the hairs of his body stood on end. He passed quickly out through the covered portion of the boat, and standing on its very edge, entered into *samadhi*.

> 'He was seen to be standing calm and quite absolutely motionless, and a wonderful light and smile illumined his face, making that place pure and effulgent, as it were !'[236]

Afterwards, having bathed and performed other ceremonies at the Manikarnika Ghat, Sri Ramakrishna, himself, described the vision to his companions. This corroborated the traditional and popular belief regarding one's emancipation upon death in Varanasi as postulated by the scriptures, adding the following details of this process of emancipation :

> 'I saw a tall white person with tawny matted hair walking with solemn steps to each pyre in the burning ghat, raising carefully every *jiva* (soul) and imparting into his ear the Mantra of *Supreme Brahman*. While sitting on the pyre, on the other side of the

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jiva, the all powerful universal Mother, Mahakali, was untying all knots of bondage—gross, subtle and causal—of these *jivas* produced by past impressions and sending them to the indivisible sphere by opening, with Her own hands, the door to liberation. Thus did Vishwanatha, the divine Lord of the Universe endow the *jiva* in an instant with the infinite Bliss of experiencing Non-duality, which ordinarily results from the practice of Yoga and *Tapas* for many cycles. Thus did He fulfil the perfection of the *jiva*'s life.'[237]

Upon hearing of this vision, the pandits who were in the party of Sri Ramakrishna commented that it is written in the *Kashi Khandam* that if a *jiva* died here, the Lord of the Universe granted him *Nirvana*, the state of infinite bliss, but it is not written in detail how He granted it. From Sri Ramakrishna's vision it became clear how this liberation of the *jiva* was accomplished.[238]

Yogeshwari Bhairavi, popularly known as Bhairavi Brahmani, was the female ascetic who initiated Sri Ramakrishna into the Tantrik way of God realization. She is said to have lived in a house in the ward of Choushatti Yogini for some time.

Totapuri, who taught Sri Ramakrishna the Vedanta, was also said to have once lived at Bhelupura in Varanasi.[239]

Mahatma Vijay Krishna Goswami, founder of the Vijayakrishna Math and a religious leader, spent considerable time in the City in religious pursuits in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Chhote Paramahamsa, a renowned monk, also used to visit Varanasi occasionally and lived in the Kalabhairava area during this period.[240]

Nanga Baba, the famous saint of Puri, sometimes visited the City and had a close relationship with Swami Vishuddhananda.[241]

Baba Chandal Das, a Punjabi by birth and also a yogi would visit Varanasi regularly.[242]

THE BRAHMINS

If sadhus were the vanguards of Hinduism, Brahmins were the rearguard. There were roughly two categories of Brahmins. The first category consisted of those who were attached to temples, conducting rituals and guiding pilgrims, and the second category comprised those engaged in the study of Sanskrit. Both of these two categories were very important from the point of the survival of Hinduism. While the Brahmins of the second category, jointly with the monks, cultivated the

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study of scripture, Brahmins of the first category were credited with manouvering the ritualistic side of Hinduism through the many ups and downs of its long history.

Let us now deal with those Brahmins engaged at temples and in pilgrim-related services. This category of Brahmins may be sub-divided into five classes to include (1) *pandas*, (2) *tirtha purohits*, (3) *yatrawals*, (4) *ghatiyas* and (5) *purohits*. Although not correct, from a strictly categorical view, Brahmins from the first three categories were often referred to as pandas. A brief description of these follows :

Pandas : Strictly speaking, pandas were the priests in the temples.

Tirtha purohits, also known as **tirthadhyakshas** or **tirthadhikaris**, were *Gangaputras*, who exerted control over the deities and sacred spots, including holy tanks, wells and the Ganga itself. They accommodated the pilgrims in boarding houses, either owned or hired for that purpose, and looked after and gave them guidance. Their jurisdiction over the pilgrims, based on place of nativity and caste, was hereditary.[243] They would maintain records of these pilgrim-clients as an essential part of their profession. As such, these records were goldmines of information regarding pilgrim names, divisions and sub-divisions of castes, their parents and grandparents, places of residence, dates of visits, etc. On some occasions, pilgrims recorded their own comments and signed these books. The tirtha purohits, who enjoyed the greatest share of profits accruing from pilgrimage, were rich and influential.

Yatrawals or **Jurnihars** : This group would act as agents of the tirtha purohits, or Gangaputras, and were responsible for collecting and guiding pilgrims. They must have attended the ghats and places where pilgrims would arrive into the City on foot or by boat and ferry along and across the Ganga. What is more important, they would travel near and far preaching the greatness of the principal deities of Varanasi and also, in certain cases, the specific deity or temple with which they happened to be connected, along with the uniqueness of the Holy City as a whole. This would induce people to undertake a pilgrimage,[244] and once they reached the City, these Brahmins were responsible for making all the necessary arrangements for boarding and lodging, visiting of the temples and other holy places, and performance of rituals. In some cases, they even escorted pilgrims from their native homes, acting as guides all the way.

Ghatiyas : These Brahmins would sit on the ghats, usually under big

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umbrellas, and attend to the bathers. Ghatiyas put holy signs on the foreheads of devotees after their bath.

Purohits : These Brahmins would conduct rituals in the houses of the Hindu residents of the City. Among their numbers were both professional and amateurs, who, like pandits, were invited far and near to perform rituals like *yajnas* and *shraddhas*. Hailing from Varanasi, these priests held special status throughout India.

ATROCITIES OF THE PANDAS

It should be noted here that only Naukul Sardars—nine classes of Kanauj Brahmins, surnamed Mishra, Pathak, Chaturvedi, Shukla, Pandey, Upadhyaya, Dube, Tewari, and Agnihotri—could be tirtha purohits and only Sarayupariya and Gauḍa Brahmins could be *jurnihars* or *yatrawals*. However, these distinctions were not always maintained, and there were cases wherein these agents became the masters in time and the former, in turn, appointed their own agents for collecting and attending to pilgrims.[245]

The pandas, unfortunately, hardly did justice to the noble profession to which they were entrusted. Atrocities committed by them culminated during the interregnum between the fall of the Mughals and the rise of the British. Neither Mir Rustam Ali nor the succeeding rulers of Varanasi, namely, Mansaram, Balwant Singh and Chet Singh could put a stop to the crimes being waged against pilgrims.[246] Pandas would harass and oppress pilgrims in a number of ways, and even inflict physical injury for the sake of money. Sometimes the pandas commited or helped in committing such grievous offences as stealing women and children.[247]

The chief responsibility for all such crimes lay with the tirtha purohits, the Gangaputras, who were charged with providing accommodation for the pilgrims and were, thereby, morally and legally responsible for the security of their person and property. The yatrawals and temple-priests could not, however, completely extricate themselves from responsibility in this regard either, for they had close ties with the Gangaputras and some were instrumental in many of these misdeeds.

INTERNAL DISSENSION AMONG PANDAS

The pandas were also involved in internal dissension on the issue of jurisdiction over the pilgrims, sacred sites and deities. Such dissension would often result in blood-shed. With the advent of an increasing number of South Indian, Maharashtrian[248] and Bengalee[249] pilgrims and pandas into

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the City, and the consequent growing influence of these pandas, local pandas grew jealous and alleged that their prerogatives and professional monopolies were being usurped. This became an additional source of dissension among the pandas. Moreover, some ghatiyas also engaged in clashes between themselves and pandas alike over the jurisdiction of some ghats.[250]

Offerings made by the pilgrims at the tanks and ghats of the Ganga were a constant source of dispute among the pandas.[251] The Gangaputras had always asserted their right to all the offerings made at these tanks and ghats. They argued that from time immemorial they had been the priests of all holy water within the Panchakroshi area of Kashi. Their claim was first contested possibly in 1717, when the *Pancha Dravidas* and the Maharashtrian priests, who had migrated to the City centuries earlier for catering to the needs of the South Indian and Maharashtrian pilgrims, claimed possession of the offerings made by these pilgrims bathing at the Manikarnika Kunda under their guidance. The case was decided in favour of the Pancha Dravidas by the local *Kazi* (Muslim Judge) after consulting necessary documents.

The matter was, however, compromised two years later when it was argued that the Gangaputras alone should get these offerings and that any breach of this arrangement would be punishable by fine or imprisonment. After the British occupation of the City, the Government ordered the offerings to be deposited in the Government treasury. Later, the Government revised this seemingly unwise order in 1803 and expressly recognized the claim of the Gangaputras to offerings made by all pilgrims on the banks of the Ganga. In 1813 and again in 1820, the Gangaputras succeeded in establishing their rights against the Pancha Dravidas in Civil Court.

But a new class of competitor emerged with the ghatiyas in 1821. For years, these ghatiyas had established themselves on the steps of various ghats along the Ganga and holy tanks, where they had erected umbrellas and wooden or stone platforms for the convenience of bathers. Thus, they had acquired rights of ownership—hereditary and transferable. Consequently, they put forward their claim to all offerings made at the Panchaganga Ghat and other ghats. The matter was put before the High Court in Calcutta where it was opined that all these offerings belonged to the Gangaputras, not only at Panchaganga Ghat, but at all the ghats along the Ganga and the holy tanks.

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In 1820, the Gangaputras again challenged the Pancha Dravidas' bid to hold the Pishachamochana and other tanks, but the Commissioner of Varanasi reiterated that the ruling of the High Court applied to all ghats, both at the sacred tanks and along the Ganga. Nevertheless, it was the ghatiyas who achieved some success against the Gangaputras, in the sense that their ownership of the platforms on the ghats of the Ganga and the sacred tanks, including Pishachamochana, remained undisturbed. Overall, however, jurisdictional rights of the Gangaputras over all ghats was upheld.

The right of guiding pilgrims through the City being entirely a different matter. The civil court decided in 1813 that the Pancha Dravidas, alone, were, by ancient custom, entitled to the offerings made by pilgrims from the Deccan region on this account. In 1823 and again in 1827, it was reaffirmed that such pilgrims were free to give offerings to their own priests. The High Court held that courts had no jurisdiction over the matter, since the offerings were 'mostly in the nature of alms', pilgrims could give them to whomever they chose. This ruling was confirmed in 1844. Despite this, the criminal courts were frequently burdened with settling disputes of this nature. Such disputes only increased with improvements in modes of travel and communication in later years whenever more travellers poured into the City.[252]

SUPPRESSION OF THE PANDAS

Troubles created by pandas became one of the chief concerns of Ali Ibrahim Khan, the newly appointed Magistrate of the City in 1781. An elaborate network of police, the arrest of suspicious persons on the occasion of any affray, and severe punishment of the guilty by a court of law were the strategies adopted by the new administration to fight lawlessness. Again, traditional prerogatives of Brahmins with regard to the awarding of such punishments as set forth in Hindu books of law were denied by the newly established Government courts. Wrongdoers were punished on the basis of equality under the law, irrespective of caste and creed. This proved to be highly effective in suppressing unruly pandas, who had claimed prerogatives as Brahmins in the eyes of the law.[253] The role of the Government in this respect was appreciated and referred to by pandits and Brahmins of Varanasi in the following certified testimony presented to the British Parliament in October 1787 in defense of Warren Hastings, former Governor-General of India (1779-1785), during his impeachment hearings :

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'Formerly there were great oppressions committed by Gangaputras on the pilgrims, on which account few pilgrims came. These he (Warren Hastings' self) removed and consequently the number of pilgrims is now increased from all parts of Hindustan.'[254]

The testimony continued further :

'He (Hastings) appointed the Nawab Ally Ibrahim Cawn for the protection and administration of justice in this City, because this Magistrate, (who) possessed abilities, is just and disinterested.... This Magistrate exerts himself for our peace ... and we enjoy during his administrations, more quite than during those of Rajah Bulwant Singh and Rajah Chet Singh.'[255]

Even prior to this paper of appreciation, the role of Ibrahim Ali in promoting the cause of the pilgrims was unequivocally recognized by the citizens when they expressed their satisfaction with him in 1787 for his attention to the pilgrims and visitors to the City and similar other services.[256]

Nevertheless, that this new rule of law over the pandas could not be firmly established, at any time from the beginning of the English administration in 1781 till the end of the nineteenth century, was evident from the following facts :

On one occasion, the pandas demanded an unreasonable sum of money from the sister of the Nagpur Raja, who had come to the City on pilgrimage around 1803, on pain of refusal to cooperate with her in observing religious rites. The matter came to a settlement only at the interference of the local administration.[257] It is also learnt that Swami Bhaskarananda, the famous nineteenth century monk of Varanasi, was visited by some of the ill-reputed pandas whom he transformed.[258] Moreover, abundant references to the highhandedness of the pandas and the exploitation of pilgrims by them have been found in contemporary and subsequent literature, such as Bharatendu Harishchandra's *Premyogini*.[259] Rich pilgrims, carrying cash and sometimes jewels, became the special targets of notorious pandas who tried to exploit them and in some cases even rob them.

There was hardly any scope for interference on the part of the local administration in these matters until they were reported to the police. But victims often avoided reporting misdeeds of the pandas, regarding themselves as helpless outsiders, being, at times, unfamiliar with the language, layout of the City and its peoples. Moreover, most victims were unwilling to lodge complaints at the police-station or file any suit in court because plaintiffs would be required to stay in the City or return there from

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time to time until the case was settled. Lastly, as pilgrims were chiefly interested in visiting holy sites and were eager to observe religious rites, they were inclined to appease the pandas whose services in such matters were indispensable. This utter dependence compelled pilgrims to bear atrocities at the hands of pandas.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PANDAS

It would be unjust, however, to ignore the significant role pandas played. Despite the various wrongs done, pandas regularly maintained and supervised the temples and the worshipping and decorating of deities, and above all, zealously guarded all places of worship, all of which demanded considerable attention, care and interest. Judging from the political uncertainties throughout eighteenth century and the lack of good transportation until railways were introduced, we must appreciate the role of the pandas, who went to a lot of trouble to conduct pilgrims from their native places to the City and in arranging of provisions for them here. Again, pandas cannot be solely blamed for all the crimes committed against the pilgrims, for there were other miscreants too in the City, who would steal the belongings of pilgrims or even murder them.[260]

Thus, though the pandas as a class undermined their noble profession and evoked public criticism, there was no lack of instances in which they rendered sincere and honest service.[261] This is a fact that has rarely been recognized or duly appreciated.

JAINISM

Four of Jainism's twenty-four *Tirthankaras* were born in and around the City. Chandraprabhu, Shreyanshanath, Suparshvanath, and Parshvanath, the twenty-third Tirthankara, were born in Chandrapuri, Saranath, Bhadaini and Bhelupura respectively.[262] Hence the City, being held in high esteem by the Jainas, was also frequented by the Jaina pilgrims, as we have already hinted in the introductory chapter. Some of them, of course, were also permanent residents of the City.

As noted in the previous chapter, Jainas were divided into two sects, the *Shvetambara* and the *Digambara*, and mutual relations between them were not always cordial.

Jaina temples were built in and around the City, especially at the birthplaces of their Tirthankaras. Among these, the temple in Bhelupura, the birthplace of Parshvanath, was perhaps the oldest. There was also

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another temple in Bhadaini, the birthplace of Suparshvanath. The Jaina temple situated at Ram Ghat, popularly called 'Baḍa Mandir' was also an old one.

Bishop Heber leaves the following description of Baḍa Mandir, the Jaina temple at Ram Ghat[263] :

'Mr. Prinsep said that he had, as a special favour, obtained permission for me to see a Jain Temple. They are exceedingly jealous of their religious mysteries and had never been known to admit strangers into the penetralia of their temple. Mr. Prinsep had, however, called on the High Priest and on one of the leading members of the congregation the day before, and had said so much about me, both personally and officially, that they offered to admit me at first alone, and at length relaxed so far as to receive him (Mr. Prinsep) and Mr. Macleod as interpreters.... The High Priest is himself regarded as an Incarnation of the deity. After climbing a steep flight of steps, and treading a succession of the narrowest alleys I ever saw, we arrived at the door of a large and lofty but dingy house, at the top of which peeped out a little gilt cupola. Here we climbed another steep staircase, and were received in a small but neat vestibule, without furniture, except three or four chairs, and with a beautiful window looking on the river, by the Priest, a tall large man, with a very shrewd and intelligent countenance. He begged us to be seated, and observed he was sorry he could not converse with me in any language which I was sufficiently acquainted with, to make me understand all I should see.

Two or three others, Jain merchants, now entered and the Priest led us into a succession of six small rooms, with an altar at the end of each, not unlike those in Roman Catholic chapels, with a little niche on one side resembling what in such churches they call the "Piscina". In the centre of each room was a large tray with rice and ghee strongly perfumed, apparently as an offering, and in two or three of them were men seated on their heels on the floor, with their hands folded as in prayer or religious contemplation. Over each of the altars was an altar-piece, a large bas relief in marble, containing the first five—the last in a succession of twenty-five figures—all of men sitting cross-legged, one considerably larger than the rest, and represented as a Negro. He, the Priest said, was their God, the rest were the different bodies which he had assumed at different epochs, when he had become incarnate to instruct mankind. The doctrines which he had delivered on these occasions made up their theology, and the progress which any man has made in these mysteries, entitles him to worship in one or more of the successive apartments which were shown us.

They call their God, I think, Purnavesa, (*actually, Parshvanath**) but he is evidently the same person as Buddha, being identified by his Negro features and curled hair, and by the fact which the Priest mentioned, that he had many worshippers in Pegu and Thibet. Yet, when I asked if he was the same as Buddha, he did not expressly allow it, merely answering that his proper name was Purnavesa. Mr. Prinsep asked one of the merchants what was the difference between their

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* Parshvanath was a Jaina Tirthankar and not the Jaina God, as Jainas do not believe in any God.

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religion and that of some other persons whom he named, and who are religious opponents (*the other sect of the Jainas*). The man coloured up to the eyes, and said with bitterness, "As much as between the Hindoo and the Christian, as much as but the Christian and the Mussalman, we worship the same God." The Priest said more calmly, "but they are more ignorant about how to worship him."

Mr. Prinsep afterwards told me that the merchant to whom he spoke had been one of the most active in the recent disturbance (*between the Shvetamvara and the Digambara sects*) and had been "in trouble" on that account. On our return to the vestibule, where we first entered, the Priest expressed his satisfaction at the interest which I had taken in their temple, and the hope of his congregation and himself that I would accept a trifling present from them. One of the laymen at this raised a cloth and displayed two large trays, one full of sweetmeats, fruit, sugar and etc, the other of very handsome shawls. The latter were far too valuable for me to accept with propriety, and I told them that the first would be quite sufficient, and that it did not become a Priest to be greedy of costly apparel. I then picked out some of the raisins and begged them to send the fruit to Mr. Brookes, but to excuse my taking the shawls. The merchants looked heartily glad, though, that they were let off so easily, and accompanied me downstairs with many compliments and offers of service in any way that I would command them. With the Priest I had a very friendly parting at the stair head.'

BUDDHISM

Though the City is historically associated with Lord Buddha and Buddhism, the actual site which has been sanctified by the first preaching of the Buddha is Saranath, a little outside the City. Consequently, Saranath developed into a township with Buddhist monasteries as its nucleus. But it, too, was devastated during the invasion of the Muslims under Sultan Qutb-ud-din Aibak and buried under massive layers of earth, save a small portion of the Dhamekh Stupa, which is still visible. In the City and its suburbs the influence of Buddhism had started declining owing to a revivalism of Hinduism under Shankaracharya, and finally, the onslaught of the Muslims. Except for some relics and ruins scattered to the north and northwest of the City,[264] no record of the survival of either any Buddhist temple or of any Buddhist settlement in the whole locality from the Middle Ages is available.

Pilgrims, mainly Buddhist monks, would visit Varanasi in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries from such distant places as Burma, Tibet and China. They were primarily interested in visiting the places connected with the hallowed memory of the great Buddha.[265] A succession of excavations of ancient ruins in Saranath, first by Colonel Mackenzie in 1815, Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1835 and Major Kittoe

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and Mr Thomas in 1851, invaluable relics of Buddhist sculpture, architecture and the like were discovered. These discoveries kindled a great interest among many, including the elite, and paved the way for the establishment of Buddhist temples and monasteries and also rehabilitation of Saranath during the second quarter of the twentieth century.

ISLAM

The City was introduced to Islam when the Muslims finally took hold of Varanasi in 1194 and started settling here. With the passing of time, the number of Muslim settlers grew in the City. As they were masters of the land and also religious-minded people, their places of worship also multiplied in the City. According to the census taken by Prinsep in 1829, there were 31,248 Muslims in the City, who prayed in 333 mosques of which 5 lay in Secrole. According to another count, undertaken around 1860, a total of 272 mosques were found in various wards of the City, including 19 in Kotwali, 20 in Kal Bhairo, 54 in Adampura, 97 in Jaitpura, 32 in Chetganj, 16 in Bhelupura and 34 in Dashashwamedh.[266]

The book, *Morakka-e-Banaras*, furnishes a list of old mosques, 281 in number, which had existed in the City in 1839. Some of the oldest of these were Hindu and Buddhist temples that had been converted into mosques. For example, one small mosque near Rajghat Fort and another in Telia Nala had probably been a Buddhist temple and a temple-monastery complex. The Alamgiri Mosque in Vriddhakal, the Aurangzeb Mosque near Vishwanatha Temple, the Aurangzeb Mosque near Bindumadhava Temple and another mosque near Adi Vishweshwara Temple were all formerly Hindu temples.[267] Of course, in addition to the temples appropriated from other faiths, Muslims constructed many new mosques.

Muslims were divided into two sects, the Shiahs and the Sunnis. The Sunnis were more orthodox and greater in number, consequently, most of the mosques were controlled by them.

Among Muslims, as well, there were recluses devoted solely to religious life. The number of Muslim fakirs and saints in the City was 1,200 in the 1820s according to Prinsep's census.

SIKHISM

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, visited the City in 1512 and had taken part in the *shastrarthas* with the pandits. Teg Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, and his son, Govind Singh, the tenth and last Sikh Guru also visited

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the City. Thus, Varanasi is associated with the hallowed memory of the great religious leaders of Sikhism.[268] The first *gurudwara*, a Sikh place of worship, that was established at Kamachchha is comparatively old. Other gurudwaras sprang up in the City much later.

CHRISTIANITY : FOUNDATION OF THE FIRST PLACE OF WORSHIP

The first Christian 'house' of worship appearing on the religious map of the City was set up by a body of local Christians, mostly British, serving under the East India Company. The European settlement comprised chiefly of British soldiers, government officers and a few businessmen who were all Christians. These people felt strongly the necessity of a place of public worship. In those days, Chaplains were appointed by the Government to conduct religious services for its employees. But, as there was no Chaplain employed for Varanasi, Reverend D. Corrie, a missionary of the Church Missionary Society and the Chaplain of Chunar, agreed to perform services at fixed intervals, if a chapel were erected.[269]

With that end in view, Rs. 5492 in subscriptions were raised from within the station and in 1809 a room was constructed in Secrole with a capacity of 20 people.[270] Afterwards many conveniences were found wanting for the comfort and decency of public worship, which could not be met by the meagre means of the subscribers alone. To overcome this difficulty, an appeal was made in 1811 by E. Watson, Magistrate of the City, to the Government. The Government honoured the magistrate's application by donating an amount equal to that collected from the individuals to date. Even with this additional money, the total funds needed to complete the proposed building fell short. So a second collection was made from within the station that same year raising Rs. 1200.

Even with these additional monies costs could not be met and the Government was again approached to make up the shortfall. In the Government's view, it was not expedient to grant any further assistance, so a third and still a fourth subscription drive was launched netting a sum of Rs. 7203. The total amount collected from these private donors was Rs.14, 038.[271]*

This list of donors shows that the largest single donation was made by W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General and Chief Judge of Appeals in Varanasi and long-time resident. The list shows further that both

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* The details of the donors and the monies raised are given in Appendix C.

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military and civil officers of the Company, European civilians living in and around the City, such as Demetrius Galanos, the renowned Greek scholar of Sanskrit, and G. Wheathy, the brain behind the foundation of the Jaynarayan School, and the wives of the officers and Christian missionaries, all contributed to the church construction fund.

The Government finally granted another Rs. 2000 for construction of the church.[272] When the chapel was completed, the committee for superintending the construction of the chapel presented the following petition to the Government on January 15, 1817 :

> 'The committee desire firmly but most respectfully, to represent to the Government, that the subscribers consider themselves entitled to the possession and use of the building which they have constructed at their proper pains and cost and that they consider the subscription given by Government to have been intended as an encouragement to and reward of their exertions, not as evidence of an intent to appropriate at some future time the fruit of their finished labours....'[273]

Though the exact fate of this appeal is not, in fact, known, the Government seems to have agreed to the committee's appeal. On 15 January 1817, the Government was approached for approving the following for the church[274] :

Durwan	Rs. 5/-	per mensem
Chowkidar	Rs. 5/	do
Sweeper	Rs. 4/	do

Edward Brodie was perhaps appointed the first full time Chaplain of the City. He also happened to be the president of the committee.

ADVENT OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

So far as the advent of the Christian Missionaries and the opening of their missions in India are concerned, it appears that they were not allowed to do so in the British India Empire at the outset. The following extract (Vol. IV, pp. 181-82, published in Edinburgh in 1803) from '*Indian Recreations*' by Rev. William Tennant, one of His Majesty's Chaplains in India, throws light on this subject, his critical observation of the Christian Missionaries, and the prospect of the Christian Missions in India :

> 'When employed in viewing the curiosities of Benares, I received a letter from London, acquainting me with the fate of the mission, intended to be sent to this mint of heathen superstition. It seems the members of it were refused permission to sail for India by the court of directors, from an apprehension that they would mix politics with religion. In all probability the idea was just. Persons incapable of

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observing a peaceable conduct at home are of all men the most unlikely to propagate the doctrines of peace and forbearance in India.

With regard to the natives, it is probable that their doctrines would leave no effect whatever, that steadfastness of faith, or obstinacy in error, which enabled the Hindoos to resist every effort of Mahommedan Zeal, is not likely to be moved by the mysterious jargon of our semi-political divines. The instruction of Youth is all times worthy of attention. But I do not learn that this entered much into any of the plans adopted by these wise men. I have already, if I remember right, given you my ideas upon this subject, and I have only to add that I conceive this measure to be one of the most chimerical and visionary ever attempted. Happily for the projectors, they have been stopped at an early period of their progress before they had an opportunity of displaying the whole extent of their folly.

What impression the harangues of a set of men entirely idle, and noted for their discontents at Government, might have on the civil and military servants of the Company, I pretend not to say. It is probable that in this line their labours might not prove so abortive as in converting the Hindoos.'

This observation deserves special attention for its outspokenness and content of a great element of truth. Rev. Tennant seems to be right in pointing out the missionaries' failure to maintain peaceable conduct at home, as well as the apprehension of the Court of Directors regarding their mixing of politics with religion. In addition to these, another concern of the Directors—not mentioned by Tennant but key to disallowing the missionaries to initiate activities—was that the Hindus were very sensitive about their religion and that any interference might result in an outbreak of serious disturbances.

Tennant was also prophetic in foreseeing that an attempt at conversion of Hindus would be a futile exercise, as had been the case during the rule of the Muslims for the most part. He said rightly that the reason for the inability of others to convert Hindus lie in the latter's religious conviction, which was interpreted by him, however, as being 'obstinacy in error.'

His suggestion that the missionaries undertake the work of educating the youth of India translated into action when some missionaries did concrete work in this direction.

Finally, however, the Government allowed the Christian Missions to proceed with their work in India under the Charter Act of 1813, keeping them under close surveillance. At first the Government forbade the study of Christian Scripture in any institution founded and managed by missionaries if said institution was financially supported by the Government.[275] That this provision was not strictly adhered to is evident from the following pages regarding missionary activities.

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Among the Christian Missions launched in Varanasi, the major ones were the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) and the London Missionary Society (LMS).

The Church Missionary Society

The Church Missionary Society (CMS)[276] had the greater sphere of activities compared to its counterparts. When Rev. Corrie was stationed at Varanasi as CMS Chaplain, he proposed that they establish a mission. He stated that he was ready to set up a school for young drummers and fifes, and for the children of Indian Christians attached to the three battalions located here. Corrie had also begun worship services in Hindusthani. Rev. Adlington, trained by Corrie, was accordingly sent to Varanasi in 1817 to take charge of a school at Secrole. This place was once noted for its jungle, thieves and thugs. Here premises were purchased, as Corrie had aimed, to secure a territorial settlement for the CMS. The buildings were well-suited for the purposes of a mission, 'being in an airy and healthy place, quiet and retired, removed both from the vicinity of the cantonments and the bustle of the city, without being inconveniently distant from either.' In 1820, Rev. Morris arrived and a congregation of twenty-five Indian Christians was formed the next year. A chapel was also built. Bishop Heber, in 1825, confirmed fourteen persons. Morris left the City in 1826, on account of ill-health. Adlington left for England in 1827 and then Rev. Stewarts, the Jaynarayan School teacher, read prayers and delivered sermons to the people. Rev. Eteson, who had arrived in 1829, began preaching a year after his arrival. Rev. Krukeberg was stationed here for a short time in 1832. Then Revs. Leupolt and Knorp arrived in 1833.

The congregation during their time consisted chiefly of drummers attached to the Indian corps and of Indian women who were mostly indigent widows. Knorp, who was very active in visiting Indian converts and in preaching to the Hindus, died in 1838. A Rev. Bauman joined the Mission in 1841, but was obliged to leave soon on account of health. Rev. Stutzenberg joined the Mission in 1842. In 1844, Rev. Wendnagle came to Varanasi from Gorakhpur and Leupolt, who had returned to England, came back. With reference to the sympathy CMS's efforts in Varanasi excited in England, Leupolt made the following observation :

> 'Never did I think that the interest taken at home in our mission in India was so great as I found it to be. Among the numerous friends I met, some were acquainted with all the minutes of our establishment in Benares, just as if they had lived amongst us !'

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It is interesting to note that by speaking of the liberality of Raja Satya Charan Ghoshal, a Bengalee aristocrat of the City, to the Mission, Rev. Leupolt received a beautiful quilt, valued at ten dollars, for the Raja from the ladies of Ripon.

In 1834, a CMS *pakka* chapel was erected in the City and the Begum Samru gave it Rs. 50 every month till her death in 1835. In 1846, a new church of the Mission was opened by Archdeacon Dealtry, which was expected to accommodate about four hundred Indian Christians. It was constructed in the Gothic style, measuring fifty feet in length and forty feet in breadth. The whole cost of the church would not be less than Rs. 14,000, of which Rs. 2,000 were solicited by the Church Building Fund, with the rest raised at this and other stations. This church owed its origin to a civilian who once visited the Mission and first donated Rs. 500 for the construction of a church, but the name of this person could not be found.

In 1866, the Mission consisted of four ordained and two lay missionaries, thirteen Indian Christian school teachers and six catechism readers. Besides bungalows for the resident missionaries, there were orphan institutions for boys and girls, a village inhabited by Indian Christians in Sigra and the 400-person-capacity Gothic Church already referred to. There were two 'Normal' schools, one for the training of young men as teachers and evangelists, and the other for the training of young men as teachers at a large college called Raja Jaynarayan College named in honour of the donor (for details see Chapter XIII on Education), and several girls' schools. The Normal schools operated on a liberal basis, and admitted pupils from all Protestant missions in the neighbourhood. These pupils received an education making them fit for employment at several missions. A new CMS church was erected around 1866 near Dashashwamedh Ghat.[277]

The Baptist Missionary Society

The mission of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) was established in 1817. It was an outpost of the Serampore Mission of Bengal. In the absence of any European agents for many years, it was headed by an East Indian who was a 'man of great simplicity and piety.' By 1866, the society had two European missionaries, three Indian catechists, three candidates for the office of catechist and two Christian teachers. The number of converts to this Mission was small compared to its counterparts. It conducted an orphanage for the support and training of Indian boys and

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girls. Later, it built a handsome church in the cantonment in which 'Divine Service' was performed for the benefit of English and Indian residents.[278]

The London Missionary Society

The London Missionary Society (LMS), opened in 1821, was situated between the suburbs of the City and the military cantonment. In 1866, it had four missionaries, including Rev. M. A. Sherring, the author of *Benares : Past and Present*, one ordained Indian minister, several catechists and one hundred and six Indian Christians. In the same year, it conducted eleven schools, nine for boys and young men and two for girls. There were five hundred and seventy-nine students enrolled at these schools. The girls' schools were built in a Gothic style by Major Kittoe in 1852. The LMS also had a magnificent Grecian style church built in around 1846.

CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY

The Christian Missionaries resorted to various means for converting the local people to Christianity. Like the Muslims, the Christians also firmly believed that without embracing their faith no one could attain salvation and escape from an eternity in hell. They believed that Hindus were idolaters and that Hinduism was degrading the people and causing weariness among some who were eager to shake it off.[279] Consequently, the proselytizing zeal of the Christian Missionaries led them to propagate Christianity in a land where there was no want of religion. Being ignorant of this fact, the Christian Missionaries set up missions in the City and other places around India devoting themselves to preaching. Their writings bear proof of their dream about a glorious future for Christianity in India, as Rev. Sherring writes[280] :

> 'India converted to the Lord, is a subject which the Indian missionary delights to think on. The day is approaching, and may come when many least expect it. And, when the warm feeling and poetic imagination of the Hindus are directed to our common Christianity, when their hearts have been vitalized by its influence, when they have, as a people, risen into the region of the holy thought and of earnest prayer to their Father above, then may it be expected that they will make sudden and rapid progress in civilization, and in whatever contributes to a nation's greatness, and will share with us in the exalted privilege and honour of extending the Kingdom of Christ and of hastening its universal reign....'

Sherring reiterates[281] :

> 'Who shall say that the intellectual and religious awakening of India, which has just

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commenced, will not produce? It will infallibly produce for India all that the Reformation has produced for England and the world. It must extinguish idolatry, must break in pieces its images, must wipe out its distinguishing symbols and signs, must destroy its temples, must cleanse the land of its foulness, so that, perhaps in many places, as in some of the islands of the South Seas, no traces of its previous existence will be discoverable.'

Missionaries paid special attention to India precisely because of its unique position in the world of religions. If India were conquered by Christianity, it was believed, other 'heathen' Kingdoms would easily be conquered. This strategy, which had been suggested by the American missionary, Rev. Dr Thomson, is echoed by Rev. Sherring when he writes :

> 'As to take Paris is to take France, and to take Sevastopol is to shake Russia to the Arctic Seas, and to take Richmond is to shake out the rebels of the United States from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, so to Christianize India, owing to its key position in heathendom, is to shake out the idols from the face of the whole earth.'[282]

Again, of all the cities of India, missionaries placed strategic importance in the conquest of Varanasi, understanding that this was traditionally the cultural, educational and religious headquarters of India. They reasoned that if Varanasi were converted to Christianity the rest of India would follow suit. In this regard Sherring exclaims :

> 'And why should not Benares still hold a foremost place in her history ? Why should not she take the lead of all Indian cities, as she even (now) has done, and show by her own example and for their imitation, how she can abolish useless social burdens, can abandon exploded errors, and can accept the Truth in all its forms, how she can strive after and attain to the highest and purest happiness, and can bring herself, with God's help, to hate whatever He hates, and to love whatever He loves.'[283]

The belief and hope that Christianity could soon replace Hinduism in Varanasi prompted Bishop Heber to quote the following conversation between two Brahmin sepoys, on the breaking of the Lat Bhairo by the Muslims during the communal disturbances of 1809. The two sepoys were keeping guard in the mosque, where the defaced and prostrate pillar lay. Heber cites :

> ' "Aye," said one, "we have seen that which we never thought to see, Shiva's shaft (Lat Bhairo) has its head even with the ground, we shall all be one caste shortly. What will be our religion then ?"
> "I suppose Christianity," answered the other.
> "I suppose so, too," rejoined the first, "for after all that has passed, I am sure we shall never turn Mussulmans !" '[284]

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Heber also records :

'... the eternal round of idle ceremonies in which they pass their time is said to have produced in many of them a degree of weariness of their own system, and a disposition to enquire after others, which does not exist in Calcutta.'[285]

However erroneous the hypothesis of 'weariness' among 'many of the Hindus' was, such predictions made missionaries all the more optimistic and zealous in their preaching of Christianity. Still, there were some among the British who were conscious of the fact that in addition to a general inborn Hindu aversion to conversion,[286] Varanasi posed unique 'obstacles' to such conversion. Mrs Colin Mackenzie who visited the City in 1847 writes[287] :

'Benares offers peculiar obstacles to any who wish to become converts, the city being the sacred capital of Hinduism, and the very focus of fanaticism.'

A missionary also records :

'Christianity has there met with its fiercest and most determined opponents ... it is the chief and acknowledged bulwark of idolatry and superstition in all India, and that, in short, Hinduism has there sat enthroned in the midst of pomp and power, sustained by the learning and subtlety of the Brahmans, and by the wealth and authority of rajas and princes from all parts of the country.[288]

This, then, was the backdrop under which the Christian missionaries started preaching and converting the people of Varanasi.

Modes of Preaching

Various modes of preaching were undertaken by the missionaries. In addition to preaching in churches, there was preaching in the streets, at holy sites where pilgrims would gather, in front of public institutions and especially at educational institutions. Other methods included missionary visits to the houses of interested persons and the publication of books on Christianity.

Here are a few examples of missionary preaching in the streets, and in front of public institutions and holy sites :

'There is usually preaching both morning and evening in the city at particular places, which are regularly attended on appointed days, thus giving the natives the opportunity of knowing when and where the missionary may be expected.' [289]

CMS's Rev. Eteson, who arrived at the City in 1829, would ride into the City early in the morning, before the inhabitants were too exclusively intent on their individual pursuits, and visit one of the Hindu schools, where, according to one description, 'the attraction of a European among a

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number of dirty, half-naked boys, soon collected a considerable crowd in front of the school' to whom he then preached.[290]

Again, there was a 'celebrated reservoir' (possibly the Pishachamochana Kunda) in Varanasi where some forty thousand pilgrims from all parts of India annually presented sacrifices to their ancestors and bathed. Not more than five or six head priests directed these religious ceremonies. Once performed here, these rites need never be repeated, so new pilgrims arrived every year. For several years, it became a custom for missionaries and Indian evangelists from the missions of the City to occasionally visit this kunda for the purpose of preaching to both priests and pilgrims.[291]

The missionaries regarded the founding of educational institutions as a very useful strategy for the preaching of Christianity. Heber writes :

> 'As a useful auxiliary to the missionaries, the establishment of elementary schools for the lower classes and for females is going on to a very great extent, and might be carried to any conceivable extent to which our pecuniary means would carry us.'[292]

At these institutions Christian scriptures were taught. The New Testament was taught at the Jaynarayan School run by the CMS, and students, on being queried on the subject, 'showed an excellent knowledge of the facts of the Bible and found passages to prove particular points, such as the divinity of the Lord, as well as any boys in England could have done.'[293] The missionaries also visited the houses of the Indians of rank to answer their questions about the Christianity. For example, Peshwa Amrita Rao, who had been living in exile in the City, was one such enquirer. He once sent message to Morris, a CMS missionary, requesting him to call on him as he was 'anxious to obtain further knowledge of Christianity.'[294]

The publication of Christian scriptures, especially the Bible, in English and local vernaculars was another important mode of preaching. But attacking Hinduism and advocating Christianity through books in English and local vernaculars written by both Christian missionaries and newly-converted Indian Christians was considered to be a more effective strategy than others. The details of such publications will be given in Chapter XII on literary activities. Such publications adversely criticizing Hinduism and eulogizing Christianity were often products of maliciously motivated propaganda based on a distortion of facts and even downright falsehoods. This is exemplified by *Tirther Vivaran*, an account on Varanasi and Hindu pilgrimage-centres published in Calcutta in 1840. Written in Bengali, the author, calling himself 'John,' claims that he was formerly a Hindu Sannyasi and was later converted to Christianity.

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In this connection, the following observation by E. B. Havell, the celebrated exponent and protagonist of Indian art and achitecture, in his book, *Benares, the Sacred City*, first published in 1905, is worth quoting. In the preface of this work Havell writes :

> '... the more popular missionary accounts (with our national tendency to underrate the enemy's strength) generally make the mistake of representing all Hinduism as a mass of degraded superstitions and idolatry; only held together by the profound ignorance and backwardness of the Indian people.'

The popularity of a few missionaries due to their charming personalities, intellectual abilities, command of the local languages, kindness and warm sociability, helped the cause of preaching. For example, CMS missionary Rev. Corrie, with his pleasing manners, candid method of conversing with the people on religious topics, perfect knowledge of Hindustani, and acquaintance with the topics most discussed among the learned Hindus, was a great favourite among the pandits of Varanasi and the Syeeds and other learned Muslims in Agra, who seemed to enjoy conversing with him even when their opinions differed most.[295] Among scholar missionaries the names of Rev. Sherring and Rev. Nehemiah Goreh, formerly a Sanskrit scholar of Varanasi and later a convert, may be mentioned.

However, some of the modes of proselytising Christianity, like street preaching, were not liked equally by all missionaries and there were differences of opinion among them in this regard. Heber, for example, writes :

> 'The custom of street preaching of which the Baptist and other dissenting Missionaries in Bengal are very fond, has never been resorted to by those employed by the Church Missionary Society and never shall be as long as I have any influence or authority over them. I plainly see it is not necessary, and I see no less plainly that though it may be safe among the timid Bengalees, it would be very likely to produce mischief here in Benares. All which the Missionaries do, is to teach in schools, to read prayers, and preach in their Churches, and to visit the houses of such persons as wish for information on religious subjects.'[296]

Reaction to Christian Preaching

The preaching and conversion by the missionaries raised a hue and cry among local Indians, both Hindus and Muslims. The Hindus, especially, vehemently criticized their own children for learning English, eating non-vegetarian dishes and visiting churches and missionaries. Conversely, Hindus, unlike Muslims, were more liberal in mixing with Christians in general. This is because to the Hindus, as Heber observes :

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'... the mode of prayer or outward adoration is not essential to caste. A man may believe what he pleases, nay, I understand, he may almost say what he pleases, without the danger of losing it, and so long as they are not Baptized, neither eat nor drink in company with the Christians or pariahs, all is well in the opinion of the great majority, even in Benares.'[297]

The Muslims were very jealous regarding Islam *vis-à-vis* other religions including Christianity.[298] 'All the Persian and Muhammadan books contain fierce attacks on Christianity either in the preface, or (the) volume itself; the Persian scholars are therefore, the most inimical to Christianity !'[299] Leupolt, a CMS missionary posted in Varanasi remarked on the subject of preaching Christianity to the Muslims that :

'... they are altogether most bitter and inveterate enemies of Christianity; they are too ignorant to comprehend a sound argument and too proud to listen to the explanation of it; they seem in my judgement to be as far from knowing the true God as the Hindus are....'[300]

Those who became interested in Christianity and would visit a church in consequence of street preaching were rather few. But while other modes of preaching were secondary, the primary objective was to propagate Christianity through educational institutions. In the schools managed by the missionaries, the strategy of converting the students studying there also proved not to be successful, which is discussed at length in Chapter XIII on educational institutions.

There are also instances wherein Indians expressed the desire to embrace Christianity, but in most cases, the actual conversion did not finally materialize. For example, once Rev. Sherring received a visit from two head temple priests accompanied by seven or eight of their disciples[301] who had been impressed by the street preaching. They had come to the mission expressly for the purpose of confessing their belief in Christianity and for making the necessary arrangements to publicly abandon Hinduism and embrace Christianity. Sherring regarded this circumstance as one of incalculable significance, because to him it was an indication of the influence the Christian religion was exerting on the people, especially 'even on that class most difficult to reach and most wedded to superstition'. In the end, however, not a single one of these people persisted in his determination and embraced Christianity. In fact, except for Pandit Nilkantah Shastri, it is most likely that no Hindu or Muslim of any respectability was ever converted to Christianity in Varanasi.

The Indian Christians

We have already noted previously that in the year 1866 there were

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some 563 Indian Christians belonging to either the CMS or the LMS in Varanasi, and there were but a few more members of the BMS.[302]

The Indian Christian population of the City included indigent widows,[303] drummers, fifes and others attached to the battalions located in the City,[304] and the Indian wives of British soldiers.[305] The labours of the missionaries were chiefly confined to these people. The CMS, which had the greater number of Indian Christians, formed a Christian colony at Sigra in the name of Jesus Christ, called Khrishtanagar, and a separate Hindusthani Chapel was also set up.[306] The commanding officer of the station issued an order in 1827 that Christians connected with the native Corps should pray at the Hindusthani Chapel, while the European congregation, consisting of Indo-British writers and their families, should attend the English Church.[307] This was how a distinction was made between the Indian Christians and the Anglo-Indian and British Christians. The following account from Bishop Heber is most interesting and throws light on the Hindusthani Chapel, the services conducted therein, complications arising regarding confirmation, and the role of Bishop Heber himself in this difficult situation.[308]

> 'September 5, 1824 : At six this morning I attended the Hindosthane place of worship, a small but neat chapel, built by a subscription raised when Mr. Corrie was here, and under his auspices. The congregation consisted of about thirty grown persons and twelve or fourteen children. Mr. Morris, the Church Missionary, read the morning Service, Litany, and Commandments, from the Hindoostanee compendium of our Liturgy, which unfortunately is as yet without the Psalms. I gave the Benediction for the first time in Hindoostanee, and then hastened to the church, which I found a small, but very neat building. The candidates for confirmation were thirty, of whom four were young artillerymen and fourteen native Christians. To the latter I repeated the question, and pronounced the Benediction in Hindoostanee.
>
> The case of one of these men had occasioned me some perplexity the day before, when Mr. Morris stated it to me: but I had now made up my mind. He was a convert of Mr. Corrie's and six years ago married a women who then professed herself a Christian, but soon afterwards ran away from him and turned Mussalman, in which profession she was now living with another man. The husband had applied to the Magistrate to recover her, but on the woman declaring that she was no Christian and did not choose to be the wife of one, he said, he could not compel her. The husband in consequence, about two years ago, applied to Mr. Frazer to marry him to another woman. Mr. Frazer declined doing so, as no divorce had taken place; on which he took the woman without marriage, and had now two children by her. For this he had been repelled from the Communion by Mr. Morris but still continued to frequent the church and was now very anxious for confirmation.
>
> After some thought, I came to the conclusion that the man should be reproved for the precipitancy with which he had formed his first connexion, and the scandal

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which he had since occasioned, and might be admitted to both confirmation and communion and might be married to the woman who now held the place of a wife to him. It seemed a case to which St. Paul's rule applied, that if an unbelieving husband or wife chose to depart, on religious grounds, from their believing partner, this latter was, in consequence, free. At all events as the runway woman was, if a wife, living in open adultery it was plain that he had a right to "put her away". Though the laws of the country provided him no remedy, yet, as a matter of conscience, this right might be fitly determined by his religious guides; and I conceived myself warranted to declare him divorced and at liberty to marry again. My determination, I found, gave great satisfaction to Mr. Frazer and Mr. Morris, both of whom said that without some such permission the state of new converts would be often very hard, and that the usual remedies supplied by the canon law would be, to men in such circumstances, utterly unattainable. I had some conversation with the man, who spoke a little English, saw no reason to repent my decision, since I found him tolerably well informed on the principles of Christianity and, to all appearance, earnest in its profession.

We dined between services. In the evening the church was extremely full, and there were, I think fifty communicants, almost all who had been confirmed attending. To the natives I gave the communion ... in their own language.'

The Sigra colony of Christians was in charge of a CMS missionary. We get firsthand information about the colony from Mrs. Colin Mackenzie who left the following account in 1847 :[309]

'We drove to Sigra, where Mr. Leupolt of the Church Missionary Society is at the head of a male and female orphan school and Christian village, formed thereupon. We visited both, the boys did not answer very well, when questioned as to salvation by grace and not by works; but this might be partly from shyness and from imperfect use of English, for they seemed very intelligent and appeared to understand my husband's explanation. They answered well in geography, and in the schoolbook of the elder pupils, "Chambers on Physical Science", I found a neat little paper book, in which was the definition and sometimes the Hindustani translation of every difficult words in the part that he had read. They are taught carpet-making; all they earn is their own, and as soon as they can support themselves they are allowed to marry; they thus form a Christian village. A pretty church has just been built, in which the Liturgy in Hindustani is read.

We visited the carpet manufactory and the dyeing rooms. After breakfast and family prayers we went to see the girls' school : they were at work, and do both plain work and knitting extremely well. The education consists of reading and working, religious instruction and a little geography.

REVEREND NEHEMIAH GOREH, A DISTINGUISHED CONVERT

Among local converts, the only one widely known for his erudite scholarship and missionary zeal was Nehemiah Goreh, formerly Pandit Nilkantah Shastri Goreh, a Maharashtrian by birth. Though he was described as one of the 'famous trio among the converted of Maharashtra,'[310] (the others being Pandita Rama Bai, the social worker,

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and Narayan Vaman Tilak, the poet) for all practical purposes, Goreh belonged to Varanasi. In later life, however, his main station was Maharashtra.

Goreh was born on February 8, 1825, in the little-known village of Bundelkhand in Kashipura near Jhansi[311] and was the eldest son of his Brahmin parents, Shivaram and Girijabai Goreh. Many years before Goreh's birth, his grandfather had settled in Varanasi, where Goreh would be brought up. He received the traditional Sanskrit education here and became proficient in Hindu scriptures. In addition to Marathi, which was his mother tongue, he had some knowledge of Urdu and Bengali too, and later he also learnt English, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Goreh led a chequered and eventful life, the most celebrated event being his conversion to Christianity. The circumstances leading to his conversion are as follows :

Many times Goreh had heard Christian missionaries, including Rev. William Smith, a CMS Missionary, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the streets of Varanasi. Notwithstanding his adverse reaction to such preaching he started visiting the houses of these missionaries to argue on the theology of this new religion to the City. Having noticed Goreh's contempt for the English Bible, Rev. Smith loaned him 'Matapariksha,' *An Examination of True Religion*, a work in Sanskrit by John Muir. This work, which put forward arguments in favour of Christianity versus Hinduism, impressed Goreh and induced him to go through the English Bible. He was especially moved by the Sermon on the Mount. Still he was not free from doubts about Christianity. Finally, it was Rev. Smith who removed his doubts and convinced Goreh about the veracity of Christianity.[312]

Goreh then decided to be baptised. He is said to have made his intentions known to his relatives with the idea that the local pandits might refute his decision to embrace Christianity. Discussions followed between him and his father and the local pandits, but Goreh could not be convinced otherwise. To avoid 'a big commotion in Banaras' he went to Jaunpur and was baptised there on March 14, 1848.[313] Henceforth he was known as Nehemiah Goreh.

Goreh's conversion was reported in an Urdu paper in Varanasi as follows :

> 'The son of a most respected man went from here on the 12th of March 1848 to Jaunpur and there, through error, wandered into a ruinous path and has come to eat and drink with Christians.'

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The issue of conversion agitated the public mind and caused a domestic storm. Goreh was then excommunicated from his caste, and thereby, from Hindu society through 'ghatasphot', a ceremonial shattering of an earthen pot symbolizing no hope of restoration or return. Goreh's wife, Laxmi Bai, was also baptised five years afterwards, on December 1, 1853.[314]

In 1881 Goreh, himself, gave the following public testimony regarding his conversion :

> 'I was a Brahmin and Banaras was my home, though Maharashtradesh has been the country of my forefathers.... Banaras has been considered a great seat of Sanskrit learning. It was so in my young days. And though I cannot call myself a learned Pandit, yet by living in Banaras I received some education in Sanskrit and I have acquired some knowledge of the religion and philosophies of our forefathers. I was not acquainted with English in early life, nor did I associate with those who received an English education, and my faith in Hinduism remained undisturbed....
>
> I even despised Christianity and thought that it was a religion fit for the ignorant *mlechahs* only, that it could never be compared with our philosophies whose doctrines were doctrines of deep wisdom. I was very proud of these philosophies, and I even ventured so far as to undertake the refutation of Christianity. With this object, I began to hold discussions with Missionaries, read some controversial books, gave much attention to the controversy and even wrote in refutation of Christianity.
>
> But notwithstanding all this, at last God opened my eyes, and he put this thought into my heart that Christianity was not such a religion that I should deal with it with such a prejudiced mind, but that I ought to examine it, as well as my own religion, with impartiality, and with a sincere desire to know the truth. When thus, God, in His mercy, removed prejudice from my mind, I began to see at once that Hinduism could not be a divinely revealed religion and soon came to the conclusion that I ought to embrace Christianity.
>
> Now gentlemen, you understand that it is not an easy thing for a Brahmin to become a Christian. It was far more difficult thirty years ago *(1848)* when I embraced Christianity than it is now *(1881)*. English education has brought about a great change in the minds of men since then.... I assure you it was a very great sacrifice to me to be separated from and cast out by my relatives, and to become the object of the greatest ignominy and reproach among all. But it was the force of conviction and the voice of conscience which showed me that I ought to embrace Christianity, that compelled me to embrace it, God, by His grace, giving me strength and courage to do so....'[315]

Goreh started his missionary career as a catechist at the CMS Mission in Varanasi. During the first nine years after his conversion, Goreh was an Evangelical Christian. Finally, he resigned from the CMS in 1867 and was ordained a Deacon on December 20, 1868. Still later, he became a Presbyterian on December 18, 1870. It was said of him that he was intellectually confident but temperamentally diffident, never ceasing to

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question the rational basis for his beliefs, and that 'He was God's Doubting Thomas for His Church in India.'[316]

As regards the chief trait of Goreh's theology, it has been commented that it was shaped in controversies with traditional Hinduism and Brahmo Theism on the one hand, and debates on the inter-denominational concerns of Christianity on the other.

His devout faith and deep scholarship were recognized by the Christian world of India and he became famous as a prominent Indian thinker of Christian Theology. He visited England twice and met Queen Victoria and Frederich Max Müller, the great Indologist. But his experience in England was not very happy. Once he was placed with a missionary seminary in London for orientation in the company of a number of prospective missionaries who, according to Groeh, were but 'half-educated and narrow-minded.' They did not show any sympathy to Goreh but rather treated him 'as a kind of nigger' and blamed him for 'everything he said or did.' Goreh saw nothing in London that 'answered his notion of what a Christian city should be.' This induced him to make the following frustrated observation on Christianity in London :

> 'If what I have been seeing in London is Christianity, I want to go back to India. If this is Christianity, I am not a Christian.'[317]

He made extensive tours in different parts of India and delivered lectures, wrote books in Hindi, Marathi, and chiefly, in English* with the sole purpose of preaching Christianity contra Hinduism. Among his books the best known was a work in Hindi entitled, *Shaḍ Darshana Darpana*, which refuted Hindu philosophy from the standpoint of Christianity, written while he was in Varanasi. It was translated from Hindi to English in 1862 by Fitzedward Hall, a formerly American professor of Sanskrit at the Benares Sanskrit College, under the title *Refutation of Hindu Philosophical Systems*. His *Christidharma Ishmardatta Ahe Kai*, published in Marathi, was also well known.

Goreh met members of the Brahmo Samaj, including one of its leaders, Keshab Chandra Sen, and also those of the Prarthana Samaj, and challenged their views on Christ.

Though Goreh converted few Indians, those he did convert were of comparatively 'high quality'. The most illustrious person to become a Christian under his influence was Pandita Ramabai, a widow-scholar and social worker of Maharashtra and a former member of the

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* Goreh's English works have been mentioned in Chapter XII.

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Prarthana Samaj of Poona, who later had gone to the U.S.A. to promote the cause of Christianity in India.

Goreh passed away on October 29, 1895, at the age of sixty-eight. Placing him in the context of the Church in India he has been assessed thus :

> 'Goreh is, in a sense, unique in the history of an Indian Church which has not so far produced many scholars, saints or ascetics.'[318]

It is undeniable that Goreh embraced Christianity as a genuine seeker and established himself as a thinker and writer. Nevertheless, it is not quite understandable, as an intimate Bengali Hindu friend of Goreh put it, 'how a man of Mr. Goreh's intelligence and learning could have discarded Hinduism and accepted, in its stead, popular Christianity, which stands on the same level as popular Hinduism.' By 'popular Christianity' he meant 'the Christianity of the church as contra-distinguished from the Christianity of Christ.'[319]

In his bid to justify his conversion and to give Christianity an exalted position among other religions Goreh made certain observations that sound rather fanatical, such as the following : '... there has never been such a thing as progress in religious knowledge anywhere among men excepting those who get directly or indirectly light from Christianity.'[320] Again, Goreh's statement that Hinduism 'could not be a divinely revealed religion,'[321] was completely mistaken, because the Vedas, which form the very basis of Hinduism, have been regarded as divinely revealed, not only by commoners, but by hundreds of men of wisdom and realization from the Ancient to the Modern Age. In fact, at the root of every religion, be it Hinduism, or Buddhism, or Christianity or Islam, there is the revelation of God or Truth.

Much to his credit, however, Goreh, left an impact on the Christians of India by his speeches and writings.

CHRISTIANITY—AN ASSESSMENT

The impact of Christianity on the City from the point of conversion, which was regarded by the missionaries as the chief parameter of success of their labours, was practically insignificant. The number of converts in Varanasi, when compared with the large population of the City, was negligible.[322] According to one calculation, the authenticity of which cannot be verified, the total number of Hindu converts to Christianity, some one hundred years after the Christian Missionary Society began its work in Varanasi, stood at roughly eight hundred.[323] This clearly shows how the lofty aspirations of the missionaries to convert this City, 'the center of heathendom,' into a 'city of Christians' were utterly frustrated.

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The reasons for this failure are many, but the more important ones were as follows: The City was the stronghold of Hinduism, rooted in a highly developed philosophy and had an age-old and broad-based infrastructure of social and religious institutions; the catholicity of Hinduism taught its followers to co-exist peacefully with other systems of faith; over the years Hindus had developed an inherent resilience to the onslaughts of other faiths; most residents were financially better off than most other parts of India; and last, but not least, caste-oppression in Varanasi, in comparison with other places of India, especially in some parts of the South where Christianity rose to a considerable height, was almost absent.[324] The comparatively liberal caste-system in Varanasi was corroborated by both Veeraswamy, a South Indian traveller of the early nineteenth century, and by Bishop Heber. In this regard Heber records:

> 'Though Benares is the holy place of India, the Brahmins there are less intolerant and prejudiced than in most other places.'[325]

It is a pity that even after a protracted stay in India, missionaries were never really cognizant of the strengths and potential of Hinduism and continued to cherish dreams of the glorious prospect of a Christian stronghold in Varanasi. Such dreams, of course, never materialized and the persistent labours in pursuit of converting Varanasi became such a futile exercise that E. B. Havell in his book, *Benares, the Sacred City*, labelled the effort a 'waste of energy.'[326]

One positive impact of missionary preaching in the City was that the people got an opportunity to learn about Jesus Christ, one of the greatest spiritual luminaries of the world, and also about his soul-inspiring messages. This led to the inclusion of Christianity into the multi-hued religious map of Varanasi, which has now been fashioned into a meeting ground of almost all the important and major religious faiths. In addition, the services rendered by the Christian missionaries in the fields of education and social service were remarkable. In 1837, for example, a famine broke out in the North Western Provinces and many destitute boys and girls were to be found in Varanasi. They had been orphaned or abandoned by their parents and fifty of them were handed over to the CMS for care.[327] These and other events and missionary activities had a positive, modernizing and humanitarian impact upon the City.[328]

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

In Modern India, the Brahmo Samaj movement, which advocated

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religious and social reforms, aimed at providing the first challenging response to the onrush of a foreign religion like Christianity and a powerful foreign culture and civilization like that of the West. The Samaj believed in the monistic and Form-less aspects of God in all religions, but mostly drew inspiration from the Upanishads. The Samaj not only stood against the tide of Western culture and civilization, but it also fought against different social and religious evils of the country. An attempt at an organized, national reconstruction was initiated by the Brahmo Samaj, which served a great historical purpose in nineteenth century India.

Varanasi contributed to the formation of the career of Raja Rammohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj and one of the pioneers of Modern India, as it was here that he lived for a few years in around 1800 and studied Sanskrit. This helped him to make an in-depth study of Hindu scriptures and form his own religious ideas. This study equipped him to fight against the social evils prevalent in India at that time.[329]

Later on, when a difference of opinion among the Brahmos of Calcutta regarding the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas cropped up in 1845, four Brahmo youths from Calcutta were sent to Varanasi to study the Vedas. In 1847, Devendranath Tagore, who was then an important figure in the Samaj, came to the City to form a correct idea of Vedic teaching.[330]

A branch of the Brahmo Samaj was established in Varanasi around the middle of the nineteenth century, which was 'slowly exerting an influence similar to that which the parent society' exercised in Calcutta.[331] But, unlike Calcutta, the dimension and impact of the Samaj was never remarkable in Varanasi where 'natives of intelligence have proceeded with greater timidity and hesitancy ... careful not to assail too suddenly the prejudices of strict Hindus.'[332]

VARANASI'S RELIGIOUS SPECTRUM INVIGORATED

This survey of the religious world of Varanasi shows that Hinduism was the presiding religion of the City and flourished magnificently during the period under review. The religious history of nineteenth century India shows that factors such as socio-religious reform movements; the impact of the exemplary lives of ascetics like Trailanga Swami and Sri Ramakrishna; and the free and unobstructed practice of faith by Hindus, gave a fresh impetus to Hinduism all over India.

Thus having strengthened its position in the land of its origin, Hinduism, interestingly enough, started sending forth its own missionaries from the end of the nineteenth century to those very countries wherefrom

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the Christian missionaries themselves hailed. Hindu missionaries exposed the falsehoods of the propaganda directed at India's religion and culture and preached the noble truths of Hinduism. This development, quite contrary to the conquering of India for Christianity, went beyond anything the Christian missionaries could have imagined and left them somewhat vulnerable in their own lands.*

The preaching of Hinduism in foreign countries, undertaken hundreds of years later in some cases, and in others for the first time in history, has since kindled an interest in Hinduism in these lands. Consequently, with increasing interest, Hinduism is being studied as the gospel of the divinity of the soul, a religion that teaches the harmony of religions and universal brotherhood, and one that offers various paths of God- or Self-realization. Having an interest in Hinduism, people of these lands are being drawn to India, and in turn, to Varanasi, the age-old and chief centre of Hinduism. Varanasi, with its elaborate Hindu religious complex, revived and invigorated since the nineteenth century, also offers a unique scope to examine Hinduism in depth, to become familiar with its precepts and practices, and to draw inspiration from it if one so desires.

Varanasi, which was already a centre of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam, made room for the new religion of Christianity at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[333] This made the religious atlas of Varanasi even wider. Presumably, with this rich religious heritage in mind, Reverend Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Secretary of the Chicago Parliament of Religions, proposed in the closing session of the Parliament in 1893 that the next Parliament be held in Varanasi. This proposal, however, was not realized.[334]

Nevertheless, the City's long and chequered history as a religious centre; its catholic attitude towards different faiths; and, finally, its having become a meeting ground of nearly all the major religions of the world, has since provided Varanasi with a rare vantage-point and opportunity from which it is possible to make a comparative study of these religions and to promote the prospect of religious harmony.

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* *The New York Herald* made the following significant remark in connection with Swami Vivekananda's speeches given at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, U.S.A., in September 1893 : 'After hearing him (Swami Vivekananda) we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned land.' Quoted in Romain Rolland's *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*, First edition, 15th impression, p. 40, 1997, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta; Wendell Thomas, *Hinduism Invades America*.

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APPENDIX A

Location of the *Pauranik* Holy Sites in Varanasi in the 19th Century as identified by Pandit Gorji Dikshit

Annapurna	Familiar site
Agastyeshwara	Agastya Kunda
Agnishwara	Agnishwar Ghat
Asha Vinayaka	Mir Ghat
Apsarseshwara	By the side of the northern gate of Jnanavapi
Avimukteshwara	To the north gate of Jnanavapi
Akra Vinayaka	Durga Kunda
Abhayada Vinayaka	Shulatankeshwara Temple at Dashashwamedh
Avimukta Vinayaka	Jnanavapi
Atrishwara	To the west of Gokarna
Angiraseshwara	Jangambari
Arunaditya	Trilochan site
Asitanga Bhairava	Vriddhakal
Ayodhya Tirtha	Rameshwar site
Ayantika Tirtha	Vriddhakal
Agnidhara Kunda	Ishwaragangi
Agnidhreshwara	Ditto
Asharhishwara	Kashipura
Adi Mahadeva	To the north of Machhodari
Amriteshwara	Brahmanal
Ashtavakra	Ranamahal
Antaramalini	Ditto
Attattahasa	Ditto
Asi Sangama	Familiar site
Asimadhava	Asi Sangam
Arka Vinayaka	Bhadaini
Adivaraha	In the temple of Shitala Devi at Dashashwamedh
Adikeshava	Varuna Sangam
Asamkhyata Tirtha	On the opposite bank of Varuna
Asamkhyata Linga	Ditto
Angarakeshwara	Atmavireshwar Mahalla
Amardakeshwara	Kath ki Haveli
Agni Guha	Jageshwar Mahalla
Apamrityuhareshwara	Familiar as Mrityunjaya at Vriddhakal Mahalla
Ambikeshwara	Familiar site
Anandabhairava	Mir Ghat

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Adivaraheshwara	Ditto
Anjaninandana	Hanuman Ghat
Amareshwara	Lolarka
Ishaneshwara	Kotwali Tola
Uddanda Munda Vinayaka	Trilochan Ghat
Unmatta Bhairava	On the way to Bhimchandi in the Panchakroshi route
Uravashishwara	In the garden in Ausan Ganj
Upashanta Shiva	Agnishwar Ghat
Ushtragriba	In Ranamahal Choushatti
Ulukika	Manmandir Ghat
Urdhadrik	Ranamahal
Uddanda Vinayaka	Bhuili Village
Utkaleshwara	Ditto
Uttararka	Alaipura
Upashanteshwara*	Agnishwar Ghat
Uttararka Kunda	Vakariya Kunda
Uddanda Vinayaka	In the lane at the Rameshwar site
Ekadanta Vinayaka	By the side of Pushpadanteshwara in Bangali Tola
Ekapadagana	Site not yet identified
Etarani Tirtha	Lat Bhairav
Omkareshwara	To the north of Machhodari, Trilochan Ghat
Kambalashwatara	Gomath
Kashypeshwara	Jamgambari
Kalaseshwara	Shitala Gali
Karuneshwara	Sankata Ghat
Kharva Vinayaka	At the confluence of theVaruna
Kutadanta Vinayaka	Krimi Kunda
Kushmanda Vinayaka	Phulwaria Village
Kunitaksha Vinayaka	Lakshmi Kunda
Kshipra Prasada Vinayaka	Pitri Kunda
Kalipriya Vinayaka	Manasprakameshwar site
Kala Vinayaka	Ram Ghat
Keshavaditya	Adikeshava
Kapala Bhairava	Lat Bhairav
Krodhana Bhairava	Kamaksha
Kushmandakhya Durga	Durga Kunda
Katyayani Durga	Vireshwar Ghat
Kalaratri Durga	Kalika Gali
Kashipuri	Lalita Ghat

* Same as Upashanta Shiva.

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Krittivaseshwara	By the side of Vriddhakal
Karuneshwara	Lalita Ghat
Kameshwara	To the south of Machhodari
Kakatundika	Ranamahal Choushatti
Kubja	Ditto
Kotarakshi	Ditto
Kekarakshi	Ditto
Kapalhasta	Ditto
Kapotika	Ditto
Kali	Ditto
Krounchi	Ditto
Kotari	Ditto
Kataputana	Ditto
Kardama Tirtha	Kardameshwar site
Kardama Kupa	Ditto
Kardameshwara	Khandwa
Karuneshwara	Next to Chamunda
Kalakutagana	Next to Virabhadreshwara
Kalanatha	Next to Sindhusagar in Sausha Village
Kapardishwara	Next to Kalanatha
Kameshwara	Next to Kapardishwara
Kupachandreshwara	Siddheshwari Mahalla
Kalamadhava	Kal Bhairav
Karneshwara	Trisandhyeshwar Mahalla
Kalakupa and Kala Bhairava	Kal Bhairav
Kapildhara Tirtha	Kapileshwar site
Kameshwara	Machchhodari
Kalaseshwara	Kashmirimall ki Haveli
Kaliyugeshwara	Siddheshwari
Kala Madhava	Kath ki Haveli
Kapalamochana Tirtha	Hanuman Phatak
Kulastambha	Familiar as Lat Bhairav
Karkotaka Tirtha	Nag Kuan
Krittivaseshwara	Familiar site
Kandukeshwara	Bhut Bhairav
Kashika Devi	Sapta Sagar
Kalika	At the site of Vishweshwara
Krishna Gopala	Familiar site
Kshemeshwara	Ditto
Kedareshwara	Ditto
Kutadanta Vinayaka	Ditto

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Kurukshetreshwara	Kurukshetra
Kukkteshwara	Durga Kunda
Krishna Rukmini	Ditto
Kusheshwara	Ram Kunda
Kamakshi Devi	Familiar site
Kotilingeshwara	Ditto
Khakholkaditya	Kameshwar Mahalla
Gajakarna Vinayaka	Ishaneshwar Mahalla
Gananatha Vinayaka	Jnanavapi
Gangaditya	Lalita Ghat
Gopreksheshwara	Lal Ghat
Gangeshwara	Under the peepul tree to the east of Jnanavapi
Gabhastishwara	Mangala Gauri
Gajanana	Ranamahal Choushatti
Gridhrasya	Ditto
Garbhabhaksha	Ranamahal
Ganapriya	Next to Nandikeshagana
Gandharvasagara	Bhimchandi Village
Gangakeshava	Lalita Ghat
Gopreksha Tirtha	Gai Ghat
Gananatha	Chaukhandi Village
Gangasagara	Asi Sangam
Gabhastishwara	Agnishwar Ghat
Ghritavinayaka	Familiar site
Ghantakarna Tirtha	Familiar as Karanghanta Talao
Ghantakaraneshwara	Ditto
Garudeshwara	Bengali Tola
Gauri Kunda Tirtha	Kedar Ghat
Godavari Tirtha	Gadaulia
Goutameshwara	Ditto
Chintamani Vinayaka	Ishwaragangi
Chandreshwara	Sidheshwari
Chandrakupa	Ditto
Chintamani Vinayaka	Sankata Ghat
Chaturbaktreshwara	Sakarkand ki Gali
Chandichandeshwara	Kalika Gali
Chitraghanta Vinayaka	Chadni Chowk
Chitragriva Devi	Kedar Ghat
Chintamani Ganesha	Awadh Mahalla
Chaturdanta Vinayaka	Dhruveshwar Mahalla
Chandabhairava	Durga Kunda

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Chitraghanta Durga	Chandu Nau ki Gali
Chandishwara	In the lane of Siddheshwari
Chanda Vikrama	Ranamahal
Chamunda	Next to Naganatha
Chanda Vinayaka	Bhimchandi Village
Charumukha	Chaukhandi Village
Chatusshashthiyogini	Ranamahal
Chandichandeshwara	At the site of Vishweshwara
Jnanavapi	Familiar site
Jageshwara	Ausanganj Mahalla
Jarasandheshwara	Mir Ghat
Jnana Vinayaka	Jnanavapi
Jyeshtha Vinayaka	Jyeshtheshwar Mahalla
Jnaneshwara	Lahori Tola
Jyotirupeshwara	Near Manikarnika
Jyeshtheshwara	Kashipura
Jambukeshwara	Baḍa Ganesh
Jnanakeshava	Varuna Sangam
Jnanadeshwara	Site not identified
Jwalanrisimha	Kotwa Village
Jyeshtha Vinayaka	Bhut Bhairav
Jyeshthavapi	Site not identified
Jwarahareshwara	Vageshwari
Jaigishavya Guha	Bhut Bhairav
Jyeshtha Gauri	Sapta Sagar
Jyeshtheshwara	Ditto
Jyeshtha Vinayaka	Ditto
Tarakeshwara	To the east of Jnanavapi
Trisandhyeshwara	Lalita Ghat
Trimukha Vinayaka	Shiva Giri ka Talao (Sigra)
Tripurantaka	On the mount of Sigra
Tilaparneshwara	Durga Kunda
Tapani	Ranamahal
Trivikrama	Asi Sangam
Tapobhumi	Next to Utkaleshwara
Trilochaneshwara	Trilochan Ghat
Taraka Kunda Tirtha	Hunkaleshwar Mahalla
Tripurabhairavi Devi	Tripura Bhairavi
Tilabhandeshwara	Pande Hauli
Tryambakeshwara	Familiar as Trilokanath
Droupadi	Jnanavapi

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Dandapani	To the west of Jnanavapi
Dalavyeshwara	Manmandir
Dharmeshwara	Mir Ghat
Durmukha Sumukha Vinayaka	In the south of Jnanavapi
Dantahasta Vinayaka	Baḍa Ganesh
Dwimukha Vinayaka	Surya Kunda
Dwara Vinayaka	Jnanavapi
Drupadaditya	Near Akshayabat
Daksheshwara	To the north of Vriddhakal
Dandahasta	Rana Mahal
Dandasukhakara	Ditto
Dhumanishwasa	Ditto
Drishti	Ditto
Dashashwamedheshwara	Familiar site
Durgakunda	Familiar site
Durga Vinayaka	Durgaji site
Durgaji	Familiar site
Dehali Vinayaka	Chaukhandi Village
Dyavabhumishwara	Rameshwar Village
Devasamgheshwara	Kamora Village
Dashashwamedha Tirtha	Familiar site
Dadhi Vinayaka	Ditto
Dandapani	Kal Bhairav
Dhanadhanyeshwara	Ratan Phatak
Daksheshwara	Vriddhakal Mahalla
Dhanwantari Tirtha	Ditto
Dhundhiraja Ganesha (Vinayaka)	Familiar site
Dharmakupa	Dharma Kup
Divodaseshwara	Ditto
Dwareshwara	Durga Kunda
Dwaravatishwara	Shankhudhara
Dwimukha Vinayaka	Ditto
Diptashakti	Surya Kunda
Dwaravati Tirtha	Familiar as Shankhudhara
Nageshwara	Ghoshala Ghat
Nakuleshwara	In the temple of Hanumanji
Nagesha Vinayaka	Ghosala Ghat
Nakuleshwara	Akshayabat
Narmedeshwara	Behind the Adi Mahadeva at Trilochan

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Nakshatreshwara	Varuna Sangam
Nilakantha	Next to Virupaksha
Naganatha	Next to Virabhadreshwara
Nandikeshagana	Next to Mahadeva
Narkarnavataraka Shiva	Bhimchandi Village
Nahusheshwara	Rameshwar Village
Navadurga	Durga Kunda
Naimisharanya Tirtha	Familiar site
Punardandapani	In the west of Jnanavapi
Parvateshwara	Sankata Ghat
Pashupatishwara	Nepali Khapra
Pitamaheshwara	Shitala Gali
Paranneshwara	Jnanavapi
Paradravyeshwara	Ditto
Pratigraheshwara	Ditto
Pramoda Vinayaka	Ditto
Pranava Vinayaka	Trilochan Ghat
Panchasya Vinayaka	Pishachmochan
Pichindila Vinayaka	Prahlad Ghat
Pulakeshwara	To the west of Swargadwar
Pulastyeshwara	Ditto
Pritikeshwara	Sakshi Vinayaka
Parvatishwara	By the side of Adi Mahadeva
Pashahasta	Ranamahal
Prachanda	Ditto
Papahantri	Ditto
Pretavahana	Site unidentified
Prayagamadhava	Manmandir
Panchaganga Tirtha	Familiar site
Prithwishwara	Khajuri Village
Pashapani Vinayaka	Site unidentified
Prahladeshwara	Prahlad Ghat
Parashurameshwara	Parashuram Tirtha in Nandan Sahu Mahalla
Pranaveshwara	To the north of Matsyodari
Panchapushkarini	Near Lat Bhairav
Pishachmochana Tirtha	Lota Bhanta ke Talao
Pitamaheshwara	Kashmirimall ki Haveli
Panchagangeshwara	Panchaganga
Papabhaksheshwara	Kath ki Haveli
Papamochana Tirtha	Hanuman Phatak
Pataleshwara	Bengali Tola

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Pushpadanteshwara	Ditto
Parashareshwara	Lolarka
Pushkara Tirtha	Familiar site
Vishnu	Near the temple of Vishweshwara
Vishweshwara	Familiar site
Vasukishwara	Sankata Ghat
Varaheshwara	Dashashwamedh
Vaidyanatha	Kudai ki Chowki
Vidyeshwara	Nichiwali Brahmapuri
Vishalakshmi Gouri	Mir Ghat
Vishwavahuka (Gouri)	Ditto
Virabhadreshwara	To the north of the Jnanavapi
Vikatadwija Vinayaka	Dhupchandi
Vakratunda Vinayaka	Ranamahal—familiar as Saraswati Vinayaka
Vighnaraja Vinayaka	Chitrakuta Talao
Varada Vinayaka	On the way to Raj Ghat
Vashishtheshwara	On the bank of the Varuna
Vriddhaditya	Mir Ghat
Vimaladitya	Jangambaḍi
Vishnukanti Tirtha	Panchaganga Tirtha
Vireshwara	Sankata Ghat
Vishwakarmeshwara	To the north of Hanuman Phatak
Vishweshwara	Familiar site
Vriddhakaleshwara	Vriddhakal
Vrisheshwara	Gorakh Tilla
Vrishabhadhwaja Tirtha	Kapildhara Village
Varahi	Manmandir Ghat
Vikatanana	Ranamahal
Vikatalochana	Ditto
Vanaranana	Ditto
Vrihattunda	Ditto
Vasadhaya	Ditto
Vrihatkukshi	Ditto
Vrishanana	Ditto
Vyattasya	Ditto
Vyomaikacharana	Ditto
Vidyutprabha	Ditto
Vandidevi	In the temple of Shitala Devi at Dashashwamedh
Vedeshwara	Varuna Sangam
Venimadhava	Familiar site
Vishwaketaneshwara	Site not porperly defined

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Virupaksha	Next to Somnath
Virabhadreshwara	Next to Moksheshwara
Vikataksha Durga	Ditto
Vimala Durga	Next to Unmatta Bhairava
Virabhadra	Chaukhandi Village
Varuna Tirtha	Rameshwara Village
Varunasangama	At the confluence of the Varuna and the Ganga
Vudheshwara	Sankata Ghat
Vrihaspatishwara	Ditto
Vidyeshwara	Siddheshwari
Vasuakishwara	Ditto
Vrihaspatishwara	Ditto
Vashishtha Vamadeva	Sankata Ghat
Vindhyavasini	Familiar site
Venkateshwara	Familiar as Lakshmanvala
Vaitarani Tirtha	Lat Bhairav
Vagishwari Devi	Familiar site
Vriddhakaleshwara	Vriddhakal
Vriddhaditya	Mir Ghat
Varatika Devi	Familiar as Goi Bai
Vatuka Bhairava	Familiar site
Balakasya	Ranamahal
Brahmeshwara	Chauhatta Bal Mukund
Brahmeshwara	Sakarkand ki Gali
Bhavani Shankara	By the side of Yava Vinayaka
Bhavani Gauri	Within the precincts of Annapurna
Bhavani Tirtha	Ditto
Bhimchanda Vianyaka	Bhimchandi
Bhishana Bhairava	Bhut Bhairav
Brahmacharini Durga	Durga Ghat.
Bharabhuteshwara	Raja ke Dwar
Byaghreshwara	Bhut Bhairav
Bhringiritigana	Next to Nandikeshagana
Bhimachandi Devi	Bhimchandi Village
Bhutanatha	Next to Bhairavi in Bhimchandi
Bharateshwara	Rameshwar Village
Bhrigukeshava	Gola Ghat
Baijnath (Vaidyanatha)	Kamaksha
Bindumadhava	Familiar Site
Maheshwara	To the south-west of Jnanavapi
Mahakaleshwara	To the south-east of Jnanavapi

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Manikarnika	Familiar site
Manasaprakameshwara	Sakshi Vinayaka
Markendeshwara	Jnanavapi
Mahakaleshwara	Ditto
Moksheshwara	To the north-west of Jnanavapi
Moda Vinayaka	Jnanavapi
Mukhanirmalika Gauri	Gai Ghat
Munda Vinayaka	Imlia Ghat (in the temple of Chandishwara)
Modakapriya Vinayaka	In the temple of Adi Mahadeva at Trilochan
Manikarna Vinayaka	Manikarnika
Mitra Vinayaka	By the side of Mangala Gauri
Mangala Vinayaka	Atmavireshwar Mahalla
Marichishwara	Nag Kuan
Marichi Kunda	Ditto
Mayukhaditya	Mangala Gauri
Mathura Tirtha	Nakhi Ghat
Madalaseshwara	Kalika Gali
Mokshadwareshwara	Jnanavapi
Maheshwara	Manikarnika Ghat
Mayuri	Laskhmi Kunda
Mrigashirsha	Ranamahal
Mrigakshi	Ditto
Mrigalochana	Kamaksha
Mangala Gauri	Mangala Gauri
Manikarnikeshwara	Kakaram ki Gali
Muktimandapa	Familiar site
Mahadeva	Next to Chamunda in the village
Mokshada	Next to Vimala Durga
Mahabhima	Site not identified
Madhyameshwara	Mandakini-Gourakh Tilla
Mangaleshwara	Siddheshwari
Madhu Vinayaka	Familiar site
Mahakaleshwara	Kal Bhairav
Matsyodari Tirtha	Matsyodari
Mahakaleshwara	Vriddhakal
Manipradipa Kunda	Ditto
Mandakini	Ditto
Maharaja Vinayaka	Ditto (familiar as Barhe Ganeshji)
Mahodaragana	Familiar as Karanghanta
Manasasarovara Tirtha	Familiar site
Mahamaya Devi	Durga Kunda

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Mukuteshwara	Near the site of Varatika Devi
Maha Lakshmi Tirtha	Familiar site
Mahalakshmi Devi	Familiar site
Manasaprakameshwara	Kotilingeshwar site
Yaksha Vinayaka	Near the western gate of Dhundhiraja
Yamaditya	Yama Ghat
Yaksheshwara	Site not identified
Yupasarovara	Dindayalpura
Yajnavalkyeshwara	Siddheshwari
Yameshwara	On the bank of the Ganga
Yama Tirtha	Ditto
Rajarajeshwara	By the side of Yava Vinayaka
Rajputra Vinayaka	In the fort area of Raj Ghat
Raja Vinayaka	Bharabhuteshwar Mahalla
Ritwishwara	On the bank of Varuna
Rurubhairava	Hanuman Ghat
Ratneshwara	On the street—Vriddhakal
Rikshakshi	Ranamahal
Raktakshi	Ditto
Rudhirapayini	Ditto
Raviraktaksha Gandharva	Bhimchandi Village
Rudrani	Next to Utkaleshwara
Rameshwara	Rameshwara Village
Rama Tirtha	Ram Ghat
Rudrasarovara	Dashashwamedh
Ratneshwara	Vriddhakal
Ranamochana Tirtha	Hanuman Phatak
Ratnachurha Tirtha	Vriddhakal, familiar site
Rameshwara	Manmandir
Reva Tirtha	Familiar as Reuri Talao
Rukmangarheshwara	Familiar site
Rameshwara	Hanuman Ghat
Ramachandra	Ditto
Ranastambha	Kurukshetra
Rameshwara	Rama Kunda
Ramakunda	Familar site
Languleshwara	Khowa Bazar
Lalita Gauri	Lalita Ghat
Lalita Tirtha	Ditto
Lakshmi Tirtha	Laskhmi Kunda
Lambodara Vinayaka	In the street leading to Kedar Temple; famous as Chintamani Vinayaka

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Lolarka	Bhadaini
Lalajihva	Ranamahal
Laskshmaneshwara	Rameshwar Village
Lakshminarayana	Manmandir
Laveshwara	Rama Kunda
Siddhi Vinayaka	Manikarnika Ghat
Someshwara	Manmandir
Sena Vinayaka	Sankata Ghat
Sima Vinayaka	Ditto
Saubhagya Gauri	In the northern building of Vishweshwara
Shalakatankata Vinayaka	Madhvadi
Singhatunda Vinayaka	Brahmeshwar site
Sthuladanta Vinayaka	At the gate of Someshwara in Manmandir
Srishti Vinayaka	Kalika Gali
Shamvaditya	Surya Kunda.
Samhara Bhairava	Trilochan Ganj
Shailaputri Durga	Madhia Ghat
Skandamata Durga	Vagishwari
Siddhida Durga	Bula Nala—Siddhamata
Swargadareshwara	Swargadwari
Shalieshwara	Madhia Ghat
Sangameshwara	Varuna Sangam
Swarlineshwara	Raj Ghat
Shukreshwara	Kalika Gali
Satishwara	On the way to Vriddhakal
Simhamukhi	Ranamahal—Choushatti
Shivarava	Manmandir Ghat
Shushkodari	Ranamahal
Swadamastha	Ditto
Shurapriya	Ditto
Shushki	Daundiya Vir
Shyeni	Ranamahal
Shishighni	Ditto
Shavahasta	Ditto
Sthulakeshi	Ditto
Sarpasya	Ditto
Shoshani	Ditto
Sthulanasika	Ditto
Sangamaeshwara	Asi Sangam
Shulatankeshwara	In the temple of Shitala Devi at Dashashwamedh
Shwetadwipa Tirtha	Varuna Sangam

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Sindhusagara	Familiar site
Shorhasha Vinayaka	Chaukhandi Village
Someshwara	Rameshwar Village
Shatrughneshwara	Ditto
Swargabhumi	Khajrui Village
Sangameshwara	Varuna Sangam
Saptavarna Vinayaka	Brahmanal
Shatpanchashad Vinayaka	In Siddhi Vinayaka
Shanaishchareshwara	To the south of Vishweshwara
Siddheshwara	Siddheshwari
Siddheshwari Devi	Ditto
Sankata Devi	Familiar site
Sharkara Vinayaka	Ditto
Sumanteshwara	Hanuman Phatak
Siddheshwara	Vageshwari
Shivaganga Tirtha	Ishwaragangi
Siddhyashtakeshwara	Familiar as Baḍe Ganeshji
Samudra Kupa	Sapta Sagar
Shukra Kupa	At the site of Vishweshwara
Sankarashana Tirtha	Manmandir
Shitala Devi	Dashashwamedh
Sixty-four Yoginis	Familiar site
Swapneshwara	Badshah Ganj
Swapneshwari Devi	Ditto
Sthanwishwara	Kurukshetra
Surya Kunda	Familiar site

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APPENDIX B : NAGPORE TEMPLE ESTABLISHMENT

I Jewels of the Deities

Lakshminarayan

No.	Items	Quantity	Valuation Rs.	Annas
1.	Pearl *torha* (ornaments for wrist) of 15 strings containing 225 beads	1	334	00
2.	*Bheekbalee* (earring of pearls)	1	50	00
3.	*Kantha* or necklace of pearls with *payduck*(?) and *lolloks*	1	225	00
4.	*Surpench* (an ornament worn over a turban) of emeralds and 4 diamonds	1	250	00
5.	Pair of *chakra* (wheel) of 4 pearls	1	75	00
6.	*Gotes* (golden necklace), *dohurree* (two fold) and *chaulmee*	2	78	15, paise 9
7.	Golden torha or bangles	2	22	13
8.	Golden *kurrahs* (bracelets)	2	100	00
9.	Torhas (anklets)	2	194	00
10.	Silver *mukut* (crown) gilded with gold	1	198	00

Lakshmi and Saraswati

1.	*Mangalsutra* (the thread wrapped round the right wrist)	2	49	00
2.	Nose-rings of pearls	2	67	00
3.	Bheekbalees of pearls	4	276	00
4.	*Choorhas* (armlet/bracelet) of pearls	4	215	00
5.	*Suttusees* of pearls	2	375	00
6.	Pends of necklace of pearls	2	200	00
7.	Golden *gursolees*	2	60	00
8.	Golden *bajoobands* (ornament for the arm)	4	76	00
9.	Gotes of gold	4	99	08
10.	*Patbes* (or *pantlees*?) of gold	4	72	07
11.	Golden *chalas* or *pyjums* (wrist ornament?)	4	59	01

Moorleedhur (Muralidhar)

1.	Surpench of Emeralds	1	100	00
2.	Torha of pearls	1	160	00
3.	Kantha of pearls	1	460	00
4.	Bheekbalee of pearls	1	40	00

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No.	Items	Quantity	Valuation Rs.	Annas
5.	Choorhas of pearls	1	75	00
6.	Golden torha for legs	2	155	04
7.	*Moorlee* (flute) of gold	1	68	15, paise 9
8.	Gotes of gold	1	45	02
9.	Golden kurrahs	2	70	14
Radhika and Rukma (Rukmini)				
1.	Mangalsutras of pearls	2	16	00
2.	Nose rings of pearls	2	63	00
3.	*Punch luddees* (*laharis*?) of pearls	2	327	00
4.	Pends of pearls	2	166	00
5.	Ear *balees*	4	30	00
6.	Golden bajoobands	4	76	00
7.	Gotes of gold	4	100	00
8.	Pantlees of gold	4	318	09
9.	Choorhas of gold	4	153	00
10.	Golden *mengeetee* (an ornament on the part of a woman's hair?) of corals	4	61	00
11.	Golden chalas or pyjums	4	30	00
12.	*Karan phool* (ornamental earring) of gold	2	10	00

II Garments of the Deities

No.	Items	Quantity
1.	Turbans	61
2.	*Doopattahs* (scarfs)	59
3.	Dhoti *jorees* (pair of cloths worn by men round the waist)	09
4.	*Kumdeel*	01
5.	*Chirdeea* (large)	01
6.	*Cholee* (*khunns*) (bodice)	01
7.	Cholee (embroidered) (bodice)	08
8.	*Jamas* (shirts)	05
9.	Shawl Joree (pair)	01
10.	*Jamewars* (shawls, the whole surface of which is decorated with silken needle work)	04
11.	*Peetambur* silks (yellow silk cloth)	13
12.	*Angrakhas* (jackets)	06
13.	*Panhees* (shoes)	04

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No.	Items	Quantity
14.	*Kufuees*	03
15.	*Bratee Topee* (cap?)	01
16.	*Patules*	01
17.	*Loogdis* (rags)	04
18.	*Pugdeis* (turban)	01
19.	Red cloths (ladies) and cushion etc.	08
20.	*Galechas* (carpets)	05
21.	*Sanvans*	02
22.	*Shutumjees* (*Shataranji*)	05
23.	*Purdas* (screen)	67
24.	*Kundals* (a noose of rope ?)	01
25.	*Gaseeas* of *bemal* (broad cloth)	01
26.	*Asans* of galechas	09
27.	*Chandwalls* (a bigger variety of cardamom)	04
28.	*Tukeeas* (pillow) of *kharwas*	02
29.	*Afta Giree*	01
30.	*Punkha* (fan)	01
31.	*Turboos* or *tant putteas*	03
32.	*Jamiars*	04
33.	Angrakhas	04

III. Silver Articles

No.	Items	Quantity	Valuation Rs.	Valuation Annas
1.	*Chumboo* (*chamar*?) (used during vesper service)	1	55	00
2.	*Panch-patra* (worship material)	1	21	00
3.	*Tambhum*	1	66	00
4.	*Kuttoras* (cups)	7	45	00
5.	*Agarbati* holders	2	09	08
6.	*Tupooshtra*	1	25	00
7.	*Gulab dans*	2	40	00
8.	*Bulkartee*	1	06	08
9.	*Chouphoolee*	1	20	00
10.	*Tulinckindees*	1	16	00
11.	*Sundeea patur* (*Sandhya patra*)	1	75	00
12.	*Tuback*	1	69	08
13.	Ac (?)	1	04	08
14.	*Dundee* or handle of ... ?	2	20	00

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No.	Items	Quantity	Valuation Rs.	Annas
15.	*Kulkarhee*	1	04	00
16.	Sandhya patra	1	02	00
17.	Handle of *ghunta* (bell)	1	20	00
18.	*Tuts* (or *tants*?)	1	80	00

IV. Brass and Copper articles

No.	Items	Quantity
1.	*Tambeeas* or *lotas*	5
2.	*Lottees*	6
3.	Panch-patras	8
4.	*Tabucks*	6
5.	Ghuntas	7
6.	*Ancus* or stands of *shankhas*	4
7.	*Dups* of *chundan*	7
8.	*Tulukrees* for chundan	5
9.	Jars or cups	3
10.	*Ghur* or holder of agarbati	4
11.	*Artees*	3
12.	*Shumadans*	10
13.	*Tats* for shumadans	5
14.	Mirzapoor plates	2
15.	*Ghugurees*	5
16.	*Amees* of stands for *naivedya* (offering)	3
17.	*Gungauls* (*Gangajals*?)	2
18.	*Abhishek patra*	1
19.	Copper *argheea* (*arghya*)	1
20.	Copper panch-patra	1
21.	Brass *chadars* for shumadans	8
22.	Brass (chadars for) *agrallas*	2
23.	Brass (chadar for) *jhanknee*	1
24.	Iron *pulu*	1
25.	Iron *jharee*	1
26.	Iron *chalnee*	1
27.	Brass *russeyla*	1

V. Brass, Copper and Iron articles

No.	Items	Quantity
1.	*Rubagees* small and large (iron)	5

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No.	Items	Quantity
2.	*Tauts* for naivedya (brass)	8
3.	*Rajuluees*	2
4.	Pooja-patra	1
5.	Brass *dandees* or handles of *chourees*	3
6.	Copper sandhya-patras	2
7.	Copper *sunpoolit*	1
8.	Copper *moorlee*	1
9.	*Sumdeea* (*Samdan* ?) *palees* or *achumees*	3
10.	*Hundeels*	4
11.	*Minnjunees*	4
12.	*Gunj* and *bohogimas*	8
13.	*Numkinnikar*	8
14.	*Chumchas* or *pulees* of brass	2
15.	Cups : small and large	12
16.	*Handas* : small and large	4
17.	*Purati*	3
18.	*Tagrees* of *tarazoo*	4
19.	*Kotorees* for *ghuree*	4
20.	*Jhalurr* and *jhanger*	4
21.	Pair of fowls	1
22.	*Ghureeals*	2
23.	*Ghungroo*	1
24.	Guns	7
25.	*Talwar* or sword	1
26.	Bayonets	2
27.	*Saheb nowbats*	2
28.	*Nukkaras*	2
29.	*Changlearas*	4
30.	*Gurwe, coombhakoonee* (*kumbhakonam*?)	1
31.	Copper *jharee*	1
32.	*Tambun* (tent)	1
33.	*Chaluee*	1
34.	Iron *tawas*	3
35.	*Mushal* (*Mashal*?) *boodhlee*	2
36.	Brass *sikka*	1
37.	Stamp hands of copper	10
38.	Iron *wiley* or scythe	2
39.	*Buzonas* (musical instruments?)	7
40.	*Mirzapooree tambeeas*	3

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VI. Glassware

No.	Items	Quantity
1.	*Chumdalees* : green and white	8
2.	Shumadans	352
3.	*Handee*	1
4.	Wall shades : green and white	4
5.	Brass branches	11
6.	Oil burners	20
7.	*Mirdangee*	1
8.	*Dewalgirees*	1,120
9.	Lantern	12
10.	*Fanoos* of dewalgiree	6
11.	Pictures	39

VII. Wooden Furnitures

No.	Items	Quantity
1.	*Penahs* (?)	82
2.	Standings	8
3.	*Khumbas* for *Saeban* (respectable persons)	13
4.	Toys (large)	2
5.	Standing	1
6.	*Pukhwajes*	3
7.	Tabla	1
8.	*Tumboorahs*	2
9.	*Chourrmys*	2
10.	*Sing jhasuns*	2
11.	Steps (stepladder?)	2
12.	*Chowgurras* (box with partitions for holding things)	3
13.	*Tukutpose* (cot)	2
14.	Implements for building purposes	11
15.	*Paulkee* (palanquin)	1

DETAILS OF THE STAFF ATTACHED TO THE TEMPLES

Names	Salary in Rupees (per month)
Narain Baba Malesser Agnihotri	75
Suryanarayan Shastree	80
Kesho Bhat Burusingnia	40
Luchmee Baee Toorey Rhanee	60
PRIESTS AND OTHERS	
Chintamani Bhatt, *poojari*, i.e., priest of Luchmee Naryan	36

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Names	Salary in Rupees (p.m.)
Bapoo Bhut, poojari of Muraleedhar	36
Ambadass Bhut, poojari of Ramchandra Ranganat	24
Bhyroo Bhat, poojari of Raghoo Rajeshwar	24
Narain Bhut, *pauranik*	60
Bishnoo Goshaee Hurdass	60
Narain Singh, *pukhwajee*	48
Kishundial, *sarangeewala*	36
Rukhma Baee Achaim, cook	12
KAMDAR	
Ragho Jamder	600
Garurh Krishna	120
A *mududgar* (helper ?)	60
Hossain Buksh, Persian writer	180
Balajee, *sareedar*	144
Hunooman Singh, *chuprasee*	48
DURWANS	
Bhurwania Scindia	48
Budlee Singh	48
Bhyro Missir	36
Esree	36
Beerbul	36
Dewkee Brahmin	9
Narain Kumathee	36
Gurdayal for sweeping	36
NOKAR KHANNA	

	Nos. of heads	
Ghureewalas	3	72
Nukkarchees	5	216
Mallees (gardeners)	2	48
Masulchee	1	36
Sweeper	1	15
Chamaren for sweeping Bhoslah Ghat	1	6
Sunneea Domnee	1	3

Above the whole establishment was Dewan Raghojee who supervised the management of the temples of the City.

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APPENDIX C : 1815 LIST

List of Subscribers to the Church at Secrole with Amounts of Subscriptions in Rs.

Names of Subscribers	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Major General Macdonald	500	-	-	-	500
W. A. Brooke	400	400	400	1000	2200
W. T. Smith	200	-	-	-	200
J. D. Erskine	200	-	-	-	200
J. Thornhill	412	-	-	-	412
J. P. Ricketts	400	-	-	-	400
W. O. Salmon	300	200	100	-	600
E. Watson	500	250	-	-	750
W. Cracroft	50	-	50	-	100
W. W. Bird	100	-	-	200	300
A. J. Colvin	100	-	-	-	100
Lieut. Col. Crawford	100	-	-	-	100
Lieut. Col. Poole	100	-	-	-	100
Lieut. Col. J. Dick	50	-	-	-	50
Major Wilford	250	100	150	250	750
Major Mouat by Stones, etc.	140	-	150	-	290
Captain Wiggins	100	100	-	-	200
Lieut. Tehnell	50	-	-	-	50
Rev. D. Corrie	100	-	-	-	100
Rev. A Eales	-	50	50	-	100
T. Yeld	300	100	-	200	600
J. Robinson	50	-	50	150	250
W. Ogilby	100	-	-	-	100
J. Calden	30	-	-	50	80
J. Govan	30	-	-	-	30
G. Robinson	100	-	50	100	250
Vigne	30	-	-	-	30
G. Bryant	100	-	-	-	100
G. Wheatley	300	-	-	-	300
J. Collis	80	-	120	-	200
D. Galanos	20	-	-	-	20
Mrs. Armstrong	100	-	-	-	100
D. Turnbull	100	-	-	-	100
Major General Nood	-	-	200	200	400
J. Miller	-	-	250	-	250
Capt. Grant	-	-	64	-	64

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Names of Subscribers	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
Capt. Thiatt	-	-	50	50	100
Capt. Boulton	-	-	50	-	50
Rev. J. H. Henderson	-	-	250	-	250
Capt. Oliver	-	-	100	200	300
Capt. Becher	-	-	50	-	50
Capt. Fagan	-	-	100	-	100
Col. Forbes	-	-	150	-	150
R. M. Bird	-	-	-	100	100
Messrs R. Bird and J. Robinson	-	-	-	164	164
Rev. G. Brodie	-	-	-	100	100
T. Brown	-	-	-	100	100
Messrs Lindsay and Harding	-	-	-	100	100
Capt. Pester	-	-	-	50	50
Mrs. Elder	-	-	-	50	50
Capt. Ningurt	-	-	-	100	100
Hill	-	-	-	100	100
Lieut. Barker	-	-	-	50	50
J. Samford	-	-	-	500	500
E. Russell	-	-	-	500	500
Church collection	-	-	-	159	159
Materials sold	-	-	-	180	180
Eusegn Stephen	-	-	-	16	16
R. T. Glyn	-	-	150	-	150
R. Barlow	-	-	135	-	135
A few privates of His Majesty's Regiment	100	-	-	-	100
Total Subscription Rs.	**5492**	**1200**	**2669**	**4669**	**14,030**

[Source : Home Public, 30 December 1815, No. 67, p. 3.]

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Home Public, March-April 1788, pp. 3701-774.
2. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 105-06.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 38; p. 42.
4. Reginald Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 374.
5. Home Public, March-April 1788, pp. 3701-774.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master*, Swami Jagadananda,tr., Vol. I, 5th edition, pp. 312-13.
9. Best illustration is the Jangambarhi Math at Madanpura. They still have extensive arrangements for the accommodation of pilgrims.
10. Jnanendra Mohan Das, *Banger Bahire Bangalee*, pp. 10-11.
11. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. VII, Letter No. 1624, received on September 3, 1787.
12. Das, *Banger Bahire Bangalee*, pp. 11-14.
13. See *Kashi Chitra*, the Religious Map of Varanasi, for locations of all holy sites. This map, drawn by Govinda Chandra Bandyopadhyay, a qualified engineer, forms part of the third edition of *Kashi Khandam*, translated into Bengali by Nibaran Chandra Das and published by the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Varanasi, in the Bengali year 1345, i.e. 1938 AD. Henceforth to be cited as *Kashi Chitra*.
14. Home Public Dept. Paper marked 'C', February 28, 1786, No. 12; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 176.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Jadunath Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, pp. 449-50.
17. See *Kashi Chitra* for a map of the Panchakrosi Road route.
18. Sherring, p. 175; Das, *Banger Bahire Bangalee*, pp. 10-11.
19. Home Public Dept. Paper marked 'C', February 28, 1786, No. 12.
20. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 176-78.
21. *Ibid.*, p.42.

22a. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 47-48.

b. Sudhakar Dikshit, *Naya Vishwanath Mandir Kiun* (in Hindi)?—Why a new Vishwanath Temple ? Published by Sri Sitaram Khemka, Sri Kashi Vishwanath Mandir (New), Varanasi, pp. 5-6 & p. 20.

c. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, pp. 178-79.

d. See the Inscription of the Temple.

e. Dikshit, *Naya Vishwanath Mandir Kiun* ?, p. 6.

f. See *Kashi Chitra*; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix, p. 3.

g. Sherring called it 'Mahadeva', Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 50-51.

h. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 179.

i. *Ibid.*; Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 382-83.

j. See the Inscription in the Naubatkhana.

k. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 179.

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l. Ramshankar Tripathi, *Kashi Vishwanath Mandir ka Itihas*, p. 95; Dikshit, *Naya Vishwanath Mandir Kiun ?*, p. 6.
m. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 51.
n. Ram Bachan Singh, *Varanasi*, p. 115.
o. Bholanauth Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo*, Vol. I, p. 264.
p. Swami Namasivaya, *Guide to Benares*, pp. 15-16.
q. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 48, 50, 51.
r. An Old Indian, *From Calcutta to the Snowy Range*, p. 65.
s. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 382-84.
t. *Ibid.*
u. Namasivaya, *Guide to Benares*, p. 17.
v. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
w. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 382-84.
x. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 47-53.
y. The rules of Shri Vishwanatha Temple, which were found to be in force in 1932, are quoted below from Swami Namasivaya's *Guide to Benares*.

RULES OF SHRI VISHWANATHA TEMPLE

1. The gate of the temple of Shri Vishwanatha will open at 4 a. m. after the morning puja and the temple will remain open to the public till 11 a.m. *Bhog* will be presented and *arati* performed from 11 a.m. to 12 noon during which time only the temple people, such as the *pujaris*, etc., can be admitted.
2. The temple will again be opened to the public from 12 noon to 7 p.m. The *chhoti* arati will commence at 1 p.m. and the public are specially requested not to throw any garlands, flowers etc, on the idol during its continuance. Anyone, however, wishing to make an offering of them should hand them over from the northern gate to the pujari. Those desirous of having *darshan* of the arati can do so from each of the gates and the *mandap*.
3. The *barhi* arati will begin at 9 p.m. It will be followed by bhog and the *shayan* arati after which the gates of the temple will be closed at 11 p.m.
4. A large portion of the offerings of fruits, milk, sweets, etc., made at the temple will be distributed among the destitute and hungry.
5. Not recorded.
6. Not recorded.
7. The temple has taken over the management and maintenance of a *pathashala* (school), *chhatra* (dole-house) and a *gowshala* (cow- shed).
8. Gentlemen offering a contribution to a particular institution connected with the temple shall get a formal receipt therefore and their offering shall be devoted only to the institution to which it has been made.
9. No one on the temple staff shall have a right to demand anything from any of the pilgrims.
10. Any one wishing to make an offering or present for the service of Shri Vishwanathji, such as materials for shayan or puja—gold or silver *arghya, kepat*, bell and the like—shall be at full liberty to do so according to his

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choice and means and no one shall question his discretion or place any difficulty in his way.

11. The public are requested to bring to the notice of the undersigned any complaints which they may have against anyone connected with the temple. All complaints shall be promptly attended to.
12. On festive occasions due arrangements for the public will be made on behalf of the temple.
13. Four men have been employed as guides to pilgrims and it will be their duty to conduct them to temple with the least possible inconvenience to them. These guides shall always be procurable outside the temple gate near the stalls of the flower-sellers.
14. Gentlemen who are not entitled to go inside the temple can very easily see the idol from the hole on the eastern side of the temple.
15. All communications as regards temple matters should be addressed to the undersigned:
    Mahant Mahabir Prasad Tiwari
    Pradhan Adhikari—Temple of Shri Vishwanathji.

23a. Sherring, p. 56.
b. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.
24. Tapan Kumar Ghosh, *Vartaman Kashir Sthapati 'Rani Bhavani'* (a Bengali article), p.2. This temple also being dilapidated was replaced by a new temple early in the present century. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p.189.
25. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, pp. 443.
26a. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 152-53.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 152-53.
27a. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.
b. See Jayanarayan's List of Ghats, Appendix, Chapter VIII.
28a. Varadaraja, a pupil of Bhattoji. K. Gode quoted in Moti Chandra's *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 214.
b. Atma Vireshwara—see Mahalla List of 1829, Chapter II. It was to this deity that a relative in Varanasi prayed for the birth of a son on behalf of Bhuvaneshwari Devi, the mother of Swami Vivekananda.
29a. Also known as Pareshwara, *Kashi Khandam*, 97/236.
b. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 31.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 227.
d. See Chapter II; Jayanarayan Ghoshal mentioned one ghat called 'Vaidyanath' near Asi, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 135. This name was possibly from the deity of Vaidyanatha. But the temple of the deity, if at all existed, does not exist at present.
30a. (i) According to the *Kashi Khandam*, its original site was in the vicinity of Karkotaka Naga Kuan, *Kashi Khandam*, 24/72 & 81.
(ii) Mahadeva endowed this deity with two extraordinary powers, healing disease and granting long life, *ibid.*
b. See *Kashi Chitra*.
c. Sherring was told that the water of this well was tainted with sulpher. Sherring,

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Benares, p. 75; Sherring met a leper here, who told him that he was feeling better when he resorted to this place for bathing, *ibid.*, p. 75.

d. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-76.

e. Kubernath holds that most of the *Shivalingas* of this area were re-consecrated in this court in the eighteenth century and even some of the old Shivalingas covered in the debris hitherto, were also dug out. But he does not mention the source of his contention. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 184-85; see List of Mahallas Chapter II.

31. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 178. Not mentioned in the *Kashi Khandam.*

32a. *Kashi Khandam*, 52/73, 73/46. There are two more temples of Brahmeshwara—one in D. 33/66-67 and another near the old temple of the deity. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p.20.

b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p.145.

c. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Vaibhava*, p. 395;
According to Sherring, the site of one idol of Brahmeshwara was in the Dashashwamedheshwara Temple. Sherring, *Benares*, p.142.

33a. Sherring mistook it for Kirti Vishweshwar, *Benares*, pp. 312-14.

b. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 185.

34a. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 113-15.

b. See Mahalla List, Chapter II.

35. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 138.

36a. *Kashi Khandam*, 73/97.

b. See List of Mahallas, Chapter II.

37a. *Kashi Khandam*, 51/107.

b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 147.

c. See *Kashi Chitra.*

38a. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 215.

b. Sukul, V*aranasi Ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 27.

39. Not mentioned in the *Kashi Khandam*, it refers to Manasa Sarovara in 64/19 and Manasa Tirtha in 77/52; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 151; see *Kashi Chitra.*

40a. *Kashi Khandam*, 97/137; see *Kashi Chitra.*

b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 130.

41a. *Kashi Khandam*, 67/1; see *Kashi Chitra.*

b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 81.

42. *Kashi Khandam*, 53 / 33.

43. According to *Kashi Khandam*, the original site of Tarakeshwara was near Jnanavapi, 69 / 153.

44. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 142.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85. Sherring was mistaken in holding that Divodasa was the principal deity of the temple.

46. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 76.

47. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*; Sherring, *Benares*, pp.129-30; see *Kashi Chitra* for its location.

48. *Kashi Khandam*, 73/33,78/ 41,79/25; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 85-86. Sherring was inclined to associate this temple with Buddhism.

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49. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 54.; *Kashi Chitra* identified the deity in the temple as Nandeshwara.
50. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 104.
51. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 91.
52. *Samachar Darpan*, 8th Sept. 1832. Quoted in Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay's *Sambad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. II, p. 564.
53. *Kashi Khandam*, 65/2; Sherring, *Benares*, p.118.

54a. *Kashi Khandam*, 97/35.
b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 146.
c. See *Kashi Chitra*.

55. *Kashi Khandam* has placed the Vyaseshwara Temple near the Ghantakarna Talao, *Kashi Khandam*, 96/68-69; Sherring, *Benares*, p.18.
56. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 80.

57a. *Kashi Khandam*, 61/165 and 100/92.
b. See *Kashi Chitra*. Here it was mentioned as 'Mrikanda' which is a corruption of 'Markandesh'. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 76.

58a. *Kashi Khandam*, 10/93.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 154.

59. *Kashi Khandam*, 16/82-83; see *Kashi Chitra*; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 59-60.
60. *Kashi Khandam*, 69/7; Sherring placed it at the western side of Kurukshetra Talao. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 167. But *Kashi Chitra* places it at the eastern side.
61. Sherring mistook it for Parvatishwari, a female deity; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 105.

62a. The actual name of Satu Babu is Ashutosh Deb, Sherring, *Benares*, p.184; *Benares Guide Book*, An Old Resident, p. 64.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 154; An Old Resident, *Benares Guide Book*, p. 64.

63a. Chandradev Singh and Durganandan Tewari, *Kashi ke Nepali Mandir ki Deva Murtiyan*, ed., T. P. Verma and others; *Varanasi Through the Ages*, p.127.
b. See *Kashi Chitra*.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, pp 137-38; Francis Egerton, *Journal of a Winter's Tour in India*, Vol. I, p. 266.
d. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 137-38.
e. Egerton, *Journal of a Winter's Tour in India*, Vol. I, p. 266.

64. Rama P. B. Singh, 'Shiva's Universe in Varanasi' in *Varanasi Through the Ages*, pp. 303-11.

65a. V. S. Apte, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Motilal Banarasi Dass.
b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p 180; Pilgrims' Diary of Rajguru Triloki Nath Pathak and Pandit Mahabir Prasad Mishra cited in Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 182.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 58.
d. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 80.
e. *Ibid.*

66a. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 172; Sherring has wrongly called her a Maratha, *Benares*, p 158.
b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, footnote, pp. 53-54.

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c. Mildred Archer, *Banaras and the British. Chhavi* (Bharat Kala Bhavan—Golden Jublee Volume), pp. 70-74.
d. Sherring, *Benares*, p.164; Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, footnote, pp. 53-54.
e. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, p. 445.
f. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 157; The famous 'face the brute' incident in Swami Vivekananda's life took place near this Durga Temple. Sailendranath Dhar, *Comprehensive Biography of Swami Vivekananda*, 1st edn., Vol. I, p. 244.

67a. *Kashi Khandam*, 49/27.
b. Ghoshal, *Kasi Parikrama*, p.144.
c. See *Kashi Chitra*.
d. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.

68a. *Kashi Khandam*, 70/18.
b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p.142.
c. See *Kashi Chitra*.
d. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 27.

69a. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*. *Kashi Khandam* mentions Raja Rajeshwara, *Kashi Khandam*, 100/90.
b. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p.143.
c. See *Kashi Chitra*, (under Lalita Ghat).

70a. *Kashi Khandam*, 14/70.
b. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 33.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 144.
d. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.

71a. Namashivaya, *Guide to Benares*, site of Nava Durgamata. *Mata*, that is mother, is a popular epithet attributed to the deity.
b. See *Kashi Chitra*. Here the deity has been called Siddheshwar.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 90.
d. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.

72. Vishalakshi, *Kashi Khandam*, 5/42, 7/72,etc.

73a. *Kashi Khandam*, 70/62.
b. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 15; *Kashi Chitra* calls it 'Dipta Singha Vahini'; Sherring referred to this temple but did not mention the names of the deity, *Benares*, p. 127.

74a. *Kashi Khandam*, 58/39, 43 etc.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 222; See *Kashi Chitra*.

75. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 65.

76. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 190.

77a. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*. It was but a popular innovation.
b. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix, p. 3.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 59.
d. See List of Mahallas, Chapter II.

78. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 126; see *Kashi Chitra*.

79. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 71.

80. *Ibid.*, pp. 121-22.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

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82a. His original place was near the Omkareshwara Temple. See *Kashi Chitra.*
b. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 191.
c. *Benares Guide Book*, An Old Resident, p. 18.
d. See Baoli Kalbhairo, Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.
e. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 63-66.
83a. *Kashi Khandam*, 72/93. Sherring, according to whom the proper name of the deity was Vishana-Bhairava, recorded that according to popular belief, this deity delivered his worshippers from demons and other infernal beings. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 119.
b. See *Kasi Chitra.*
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 119.
d. See Mahalla List of 1796, Bhut Bhairo, Chapter II.
84. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 62.
85. See Appendix : Location of Holy Sites.
86a. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 228.
b. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
c. Phatak Choushatti. See Mahalla List of 1781, Chapter II.
87. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 142.
88a. *Kashi Khandam*, 83/26.
b. See *Kashi Chitra.*
c. This explains why Vikata was popularly called Sankata, derived from *sankata*, meaning trouble.
d. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 144-45.
e. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.
f. See Jayanarayan's List of Ghats, Chapter VII.
89a. Bhargava's Standard Illustrated Dictionary of the Hindi Language, p. 482; *Kashi Khandam*, 70/26, p. 131.
b. Sherring mistook her for Varanasi Devi, *Benares*, p. 131.
c. See *Kashi Chitra.*
90. *Kashi Khandam*, 69/7; Sherring placed it at the western side of Kurukshetra Talao, *Benares*, p167. But *Kashi Chitra* places it at the eastern side.
91a. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, p. 444.
b. See *Kashi Chitra.*
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 120.
92. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 86-87.
93a. This temple was constructed in 17th century, Rambachan Singh, *Varanasi*, p. 103. The deity was installed by the Vaishnavas of Vrindaban, Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, pp. 453-55.
b. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, pp. 453-55; An Old Resident (F. F. Wyman), *From Calcutta to the Snowy Range*, p 70.
c. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, pp. 180-81.
d. *Ibid.*
e. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, pp. 453-55.
f. An Old Resident, *From Calcutta to the Snowy Range*, p. 70.
g. Judicial Civil Proceedings No. 8, May 4, 1798, Vol. 43, pp. 20-24.
h. *Ibid.*

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i. *Ibid.*
j. The petitioners were as follows: Manohar Das, Agent for the House of Gowal Das and Monohar Das—Bullam Das, Agent for the House of Brij Ruwan (Raman) Das, Kaeman Das.
k. Judicial Proceedings No. 7.
l. *Ibid.*
m. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II.
94a. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix, p. 2.
b. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 230 & p. 394.
c. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 187.
d. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 109-10.
95a. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 59, 73, 76, 89, 100, 129, 170.
b. *Ibid.*, p.126.
96a. *Kashi Khandam*, 69/14-15.
b. Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 33.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 127.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
98. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 90.
99. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 65-66.
100. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 56.
101a. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, pp. 176-77;
b. Das, *Banger Bahire Bangalee*, pp. 12-13.
102. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 150-51; see *Kashi Chitra*.
103. Sherring, *Benares*, p.103.
104. *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 126. Some of such blocks of stone have been preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan Museum of Banaras Hindu University.
105a. *Kashi Khandam*, 97/62.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 100.
106a. Not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 185. Later on a temple was built for Sangameshwara near Adi Keshava, see *Kashi Chitra*.
107. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 153.
108. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
109. *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.
110. *Kashi Khandam*, 66/23; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 89.
111. Rajaram Pal, *Bhava Pratik Mandir Gurudhama; Varanasi Through the Ages*, pp. 141-44.
112. Inscription in Gurudhama Temple. Quoted in Tapan Kumar Ghosh's *Kashite Jaynarayan Ghoshaler Avadan* (a Bengali article), pp. 4-5.
113. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 221.
114. It is an abridged version of Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj's *Bhava Pratik Mandir Gurudhama*, a Bengali treatise on the Gurudhama Temple.
115. Foreign Political Department, 29 October, 1858, No. 244.
116. Thomas Bacon, The Oriental Annual, pp. 89-90.

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117. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 213-29.
118. *Hindustan Illustrated*, a series of views drawn by Turner Stanfield and others with description by Emma Roberts, Vol. I, pp. 125-26.
119. Raikrishna Das, the late founder-director of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University and a descendant of a traditional family of Varanasi, remarked during an interview taken by the author that the system of *devadasis* was unknown in Varanasi.
120. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 219; see *Kashi Chitra*; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 6.
121. *Kashi Khandam*, 97/137; see *Kashi Chitra*: Prinsep wrote an account of the well in Asiatic Researches; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix, p. 6.
122. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 166-67; *Kashi Khandam*, 96/8; see *Kashi Chitra*.
123. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 66. This well is not mentioned in *Kashi Khandam*. However, it might have been built after the model of Kalada Kup of the Vriddhakala Temple. See the entry for Kalada Kup in this chapter.
124. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 190; *Kashi Khandam*, 33/116; see *Kashi Chitra*; Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 184 & p. 199; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 7.

125a. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 87-88.
b. *Kashi Khandam*, 66/23.
c. See Nag Kuan Mahalla under List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.

126a. *Kashi Khandam*, 53/37.
b. See Karna Ghanta Mahalla under List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
c. Sherring, *Benares*, p.118.

127. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 56. For interesting information on Kashi Karwat, see Hans. *Kashi Visheshank*, p. 114.
128. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 53-54.
129. *Kashi Khandam*, 84/76; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 144; see *Kashi Chitra*.
130. Shiva himself erected this *kunda* for Indra, *Kashi Khandam*, 81/20, & 27; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 85-86; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, Appendix, p. 3; see Prinsep's List of Mahallas.
131. *Kashi Khandam*, 72/89; Sherring, *Benares*, p.166; see *Kashi Chitra*; see List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
132. *Kashi Khandam*, 54/73; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 123-26; see *Kashi Chitra* and List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
133. *Kashi Khandam*, 47/54-57; Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 273-81; see *Kashi Chitra*.

134a. *Kashi Khandam*, 69/137-45.
b. See List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
c. Kubernath refers to Collector Bax's Map of 1863. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 200.
d. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 114-15.

135. *Kashi Khandam*, 68/82-83; Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 193.

136a. *Kashi Khandam*, 77/52; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 150; Sukul, *Varanasi ka Adhidaivik Vaibhava*, p. 25.

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b. See List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
137. *Kashi Khandam*, 48/48; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 127.
138. *Kashi Khandam*, 52/68-69.
139a. *Kashi Khandam*, 53/27; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 218.
b. See List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
140a. Named after the Sun-god Lolarka, *Kashi Khandam*, 46/45.
b. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 167-68; Motichandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 402.
141. *Kashi Khandam*, 84/12; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 222; see Lakshmi Kunda under List of Mahallas 1796, Chapter II.
142. *Kashi Khandam*, 33/114; Sherring was however inclined to believe that this was but an Ashokan Pillar, *Benares*, pp. 191-92, 305-08.
143. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 70-71.
144. *Ibid.*, p.185.
145. *Tantra*, Sanmarg Kashi Visheshank, p. 77-79.
146. Baidyanath Saraswati, *Kashi*, pp. 14-15, published by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, 1975.
147. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 173.
148. Usha Narain, 'The Merchant Bankers of Benares', *Varanasi Through the Ages*, p. 211.
149. H. R. Nevill, *Benares : A Gazetteer*, pp. 240-51.
150. *Ibid.*
151. *Ibid.*
152. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-41.
153. *Ibid.*, Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 210.
154. Nevill, *Benares : A Gazetteer*, pp. 240-41.
155. *Ibid.*
156. *Ibid.*
157. *Ibid.*, pp. 246-47.
158. *Ibid.*, p. 247.
159. *Ibid.*
160. *Ibid.*, p. 251.
161. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 206.
162. *Ibid.*, pp. 206-07.
163. *Ibid.*, p. 207.
164. *Ibid.*
165. *Ibid.*, p. 208.
166. *Ibid.*
167. *Ibid.*
168. Niranjanswarup Brahmachari, *Rajguru Sumerumathasya Mathamnayah*, pp. 1 and 6, Rajguru Math, Varanasi, no date. This booklet contains a list of all the *mohunts* of this Math since 827 A. D.
169. Emma Roberts, *Hindustan*, Vol. I, pp. 125-26.
170. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 373.
171. H. Ashmore, *Narrative of a Three Months' March in India*, pp. 181-83.
172. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 175.

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173. Emma Roberts, *Hindustan*, pp. 125-26.
174. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p.175.
175. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 373.
176. Description by Rev. Hobert Caunter, *The Oriental Annual or Scenes in India*, pp.138-40.
177. H. H. Wilson, *Religious sects of the Hindus*, p. 130.
178. *Ibid.*
179. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 176.
180. Jonathan Duncan, *An Account of Two Fakeers*, Asiatic Researches, Vol. V, pp. 37-52.
181. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, pp. 175-76; Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 130.
182. Duncan, *An Account of Two Fakeers*, Asiatic Researches, Vol. V, pp. 37-52.
183. This account was told in May, 1792; *Ibid.*
184. This interview took place in August, 1792; *Ibid.*
185. Caunter, *The Oriental Annual*, p. 174.
186. Duncan, *An Account of Two Fakeers*, Asiatic Researches, Vol. V, pp. 37-52.
187. Umacharan Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami ka Jivan Charit* in Hindi (the Biography of Mahatma Trailanga Swami), p.14.
188. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 217.
189. Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, pp. 11-81.
190. Consequently Bengalees visited him in greater number and among his fcllowers Bengalees were numerous, Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, p. 4.
191. Brahmachari Kuladananda, *Sri Sri Sadguru Sanga*, Vol. II, pp. 109-11.
192. *Ibid.*
193. According to Kubernath, the year of the Swami's passing away is 1881. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 219.
194. Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, p. 79.
195. Swami Vivekananda, 'Rajayoga', *Complete Works*, Centenary edition, Vol. I, p. 138.
196. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master*, Swami Jagadananda, tr., Vol. I, pp. 312-13.
197. *Ibid.*
198. M. (Mahendra Nath Gupta), *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Swami Nikhilananda, tr., Indian edition, 1996, p. 36.
199. Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master*, Swami Jagadananda, tr., Vol. II, 5th. edn., p. 651. It is, however, not true, as Kubernath wrote that Trailanga Swami was Sri Ramakrishna's *Parama Guru* or preceptor's preceptor. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 218-19.
200. Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, p. 26, passim.
201. Sadananda Yogi, *Vedantasara*, Brahmachari Medhachaitanya, ed., pp. 220-26.
202. Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, pp. 49, 79.
203. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31, 34-35. Swami Vivekananda spoke to Nivedita about Trailanga Swami, '... who, at the time he (Swamiji) saw him, was very very old, more than hundred years apparently. He was always silent and would lie in a Siva-temple

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at Varanasi, seemingly a madcap, with his feet on the image.'—Shailendranath Dhar, *A Comprehensive Biography of Swami Vivekananda*, Part II, p. 1175.

204. As per the report of Umacharan, Trailanga Swami had only five disciples—Swami Sadananda, Swami Kalicharan, Swami Brahmananda, Swami Bholanath and Umacharan himself, Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, pp. 71, 77.
205. Reference to the Swami's religious discussions is found in *Dharmaprasange Swami Brahmananda* (in Bengali), religious discourses of Swami Brahmananda, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, 10th edition, p. 41.
206. Mukhopadhyay, *Mahatma Trailanga Swami*, pp. 137-38.
207. *Samachar Darpan* (A Bengali Newspaper), February 11, 1832. Quoted in Bandyopadhyay's *Samvad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. II, pp. 104-05.
208. Baladeo Upadhyay, *Panditya Parampara*, Part II, pp. 3-10.
209. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-27; for details of his works, see Chapter XII.
210. *Jivanmukti Sukhaprapti* (in Beng.) (Reminiscences and Conversations of Swami Turiyananda, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna), 2nd edn., p. 128, published by Udbodhan Karyalaya, Calcutta, B.S. 1357.
211. Ray, *Sadhusanter Mahasangame*, Vol. I, pp. 86-96.
212. Banarasilal Pandey, *Maharaja Balwant Singh aur Kashi ka Atit*, p. 102.
213. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
214. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
215. *Ibid.*
216. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
217. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
218. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-17.
219. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, p. 449.
220. *A History of the Rajguru Math*, p. 40, published by Sri Brahmananda Tirtha Dandi, Kashidham, B.S. 1317, p. 40.
221. Upadhyay, *Panditya Parampara*, Part II, pp. 30-35; Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. VIII, pp. 193-99.
222. Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. VIII, p. 198.
223. *Ibid.*, pp. 166-204.
224. Quoted from Swami Chetanananda's *Swami Adbhutananda—Teachings and Reminiscences*, p. 57. For further details of the Swami's life, also see Upadhyay, *Panditya Parampara*, Part II, pp. 49-66; Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. VIII, pp. 130-53.
225. Ray, *Sadhu Santer Mahasangame*, Vol. I, p. 87; Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. VII, p. 201.
226. Ray, *Sadhu Santer Mahasangame*, Vol. I, p. 94.
227. *Ibid.*
228. *Ibid.*
229. Ray, *Sadhu Santer Mahasangame*, Vol. I, p. 94.
230. Chandramouli K., *Kashi—The City Illuminous*, p.110.
231. Batuknath Bhattacharya, *Varenya Charit*, p. 52.
232. Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. VIII, p. 195. Gauḍa Swami, the preceptor of Swami Vishuddhananda, is reported to have wished such a change.

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233. For an account of Sri Ramakrishna's pilgrimage to Varanasi, see Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master*, Sw. Jagadananda, tr., Vol. I, 5th edn., pp. 311-14. It is erroneous to hold, as one writer does, that Sri Ramakrishna visited Kashi with the sole purpose of paying homage to Trailanga Swami, see Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 218-19.
234. Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master*, Vol. I, p. 312.
235. Sri Ramakrishna's movements during his stay in Varanasi revealed how these corroborated his firm belief that Varanasi is made of gold, *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 649-50.
236. *Ibid.*, p. 651.
237. *Ibid.*
238. *Ibid.* Moreover, in Varanasi, Sri Ramakrishna also had a vision of an ascetic with a luminous body and a beard, who escorted him in different temples and showed him round. This luminous spirit was possibly Kalabhairava, the deified Magistrate of the City; *Dharmaprasange Swami Brahmananda* (Bengali), 10th edn., p. 86.
239. Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master*, Swami Jagadananda, tr., Vol. I, p.313; Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 216. For further details of Sri Ramakrishna's visit to Varanasi, see 'Sri Ramakrishna's pilgrimage to Varanasi' by Swami Prabhananda, *Vedanta Kesari* (a monthly), May to July, 1995.
240. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 220-22.
241. Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. VIII, pp. 200-01.
242. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 226-27.
243. Interview of Anjaninandan Mishra, a *panda*, on 3. 6. 1972.
244. Walter Hamilton, *Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindustan*, Vol. I, pp. 306-07. One author described them as pilgrim-hunters, An Old Resident, *The Benares Guide Book*, p. 22; Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 148.
245. Sivaprasad Mishra Rudra, *Kashi ke Tirthadhyaksha*, *Hans : Kashi Visheshank*, pp. 113-15; Interview of Anjaninandan Mishra, on June 3, 1972.
246. Letter of the Brahmins of Varanasi appreciating Warren Hastings during his impeachment by the British Parliament, Home Dept. (Public) Cons., 1 August, 1788, No.3, Paper B; Niranjan Mukherjee, *Bharatvarshiya Raj Darpan*, Part I, the section on what benefits Varanasi has derived from the British occupation of Varanasi.
247. Sivaprasad Mishra Rudra, *Kashi ke Tirthadhyaksha*, *Hans*, pp.113-15; Letter of the Brahmins and others, Home Dept. (Public) Cons., 1 August, 1788, No. 3, Paper B.
248. Pilgrimage of Maharashtrians to Varanasi has been referred to in number of places in the records of Peshwa Daftar. Quoted in *Kashi ka Itihas*, pp. 304-05, & 399, and Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. VIII, Letter No. 114, 29 March, 1785; Letter No. 489, 29 March, 1786.
249. Innumerable references to pilgrimages of Bengalees to Varanasi are found in the contemporary Bengalee newspapers and magazines. Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay, *Samvadpatre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. I, p. 32; Sometimes the

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Bengalee pilgrims formed a large party. For example, Dewan Vijaya Govinda Singha of Murshidabad, went to Varanasi in 1822 with 700-800 men in 28 boats, *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 160.

250. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, pp. 398-99.
251. Nevill, *Benares : A Gazetteer*, pp. 68-71.
252. *Ibid.*
253. Moti Chandra, *Kashi Ka Itihas*, pp. 390-99.
254. Letter of the Brahmins and others, Home Dept. (Public) Cons., 1 August, 1788, No. 3, Paper B.
255. *Ibid.*
256. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. VII, Letter No. 1612, received on Sept. 3, 1787.
257. Valentia, *Voyages and Travels to India*, Vol. I, p. 80.
258. Ray, *Bharater Sadhak*, Vol. I, pp. 141-42.
259. References to the torture of pilgrims by Varanasi pandas have been made by a number of authors including Babu Harishchandra of Varanasi in their literary outfits.
260. List of convicts ordered to be transported to Andaman, Judicial Dept. (Criminal), Vol. 13, Proceeding No. B, 25 July, 1794, pp. 310-19.
261. Systematic records of pilgrims are kept by the pandas. Two such books have been preserved in the Late Babu Devinarayan's house in Vishwanath Gali.
262. See also 'Jaina and Buddhist Influence' section in Chapter I.
263. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 385.
264. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 25, 292-312.
265. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 188.
266. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 42.
267. *Ibid.*, pp. 298-325.
268. *Varanasi ke Gurudwaron ka Itihas* (History of the Gurudwaras of Varanasi), pp. 1-13, pub. Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, Varanasi.
269. Home Dept. Cons., December 30, 1815, No. 66; Home Public, January 28, 1817.
270. Home Dept. Public, January 28, 1817, No. 26a; Home Dept. Public Cons., December 30, 1815, No. 66.
271. Home Public, December 30, 1815, No. 67.
272. Home Public, January 28, 1817, No. 26A.
273. Home Dept. Public Cons., December 30, 1815, No. 66.
274. Home Public, January 28, 1817, No. 26A.
275. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 357.
276. Rev. James Long, 'Church Mission in Calcutta', *Hand Book of Bengal Mission in connexion with the Church of England*, pp. 64-66.
277. Accounts of the activities of the CMS, BMS and LMS have been taken from Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 333-34. LMS Rev. William Buyer's *Recollections of Northern India* and LMS Rev. J. Kennedy's *Life and Work in Benares* also furnish detailed accounts of the missionary activities in Varanasi during the nineteenth century.

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278. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 333-34.
279. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 438.
280. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 359-60.
281. *Ibid.*, p.359.
282. *Ibid.*
283. *Ibid.*, p. 360.
284. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 430-31.
285. *Ibid.*, pp. 437-38.
286. William Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, Vol. II, pp. 181-82.
287. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, p. 28.
288. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 356-57.
289. Rev. James Long, *Hand Book of Bengal Mission*, pp. 64-66.
290. *Ibid.*
291. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 353.
292. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 357.
293. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, p. 28.
294. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 396.
295. *Ibid.*, p. 339.
296. *Ibid.*, pp. 395-96.
297. *Ibid.*, p. 381.
298. *Ibid.*
299. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, p. 28.
300. Rev. James Long, *Hand Book of Bengal Mission*, pp. 64-66.
301. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 353-54.
302. *Ibid.*, pp. 228-29.
303. Rev. James Long, *Hand Book of Bengal Mission*, pp. 64-66.
304. *Ibid.*
305. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 395.
306. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, p. 29; Sherring, *Benares*, p. 333; Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 368.
307. Rev. James Long, *Hand Book of Bengal Mission*, pp. 64-66.
308. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 368-69.
309. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, pp. 28-29.
310. Balwant A. M. Paradkar, *The Theology of Nehemiah Goreh*, Preface by M. M. Thomas and T. K. Thomas, editors of the *Confessing the Faith* in India Series. For a detailed biography of Goreh, also see Charles Edwyn Gardner's *Life of Father Goreh*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1900.
311. Paradkar, *The Theology of Nehemiah Goreh*, p. 1.
312. *Ibid.*, p.2.
313. *Ibid.*, p.3.
314. *Ibid.*, p.4.
315. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
316. *Ibid.*, p.10.
317. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Scholar Extraordinary : The life of Professor Friedrich Max Muller*, p. 292.

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318. Remark of Rajaiah D. Paul, quoted in Paradkar's *The Theology of Nehemiah Goreh*, p. 12.
319. Chaudhuri, *Scholar Extraordinary*, p. 293.
320. Paradkar, *The Theology of Nehemiah Goreh*, p.10.
321. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
322. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 395.
323. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 160.
324. Sittapati and V. Purusottam ed. and trans., Enugula Veeraswamy's Journal (*Kashiyatra Charitra*), p.108.
325. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, p. 347.
326. E. B. Havell, *Benares the Sacred City*, first published in 1905, reprinted in 1990, p. 226.
327. Rev. J. Kennedy, *Life and Work in Benares*, p. 26.
328. Sherring, *Benares*, Chapter XXII.
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330. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
331. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 345.
332. *Ibid.*, p. 336.
333. It is strongly believed by some quarters that Jesus Christ had lived in Tibet and different parts of India, including Varanasi, during the 'lost years' of his life. *The Christ of India*, pp. 13-14, Light of Christ Monastery, California.
334. Rev. John Barrows, ed., *The World's Parliament of Religions*, Vol. I, p 177, The Parliament Publishing Company, Chicago, 1893.

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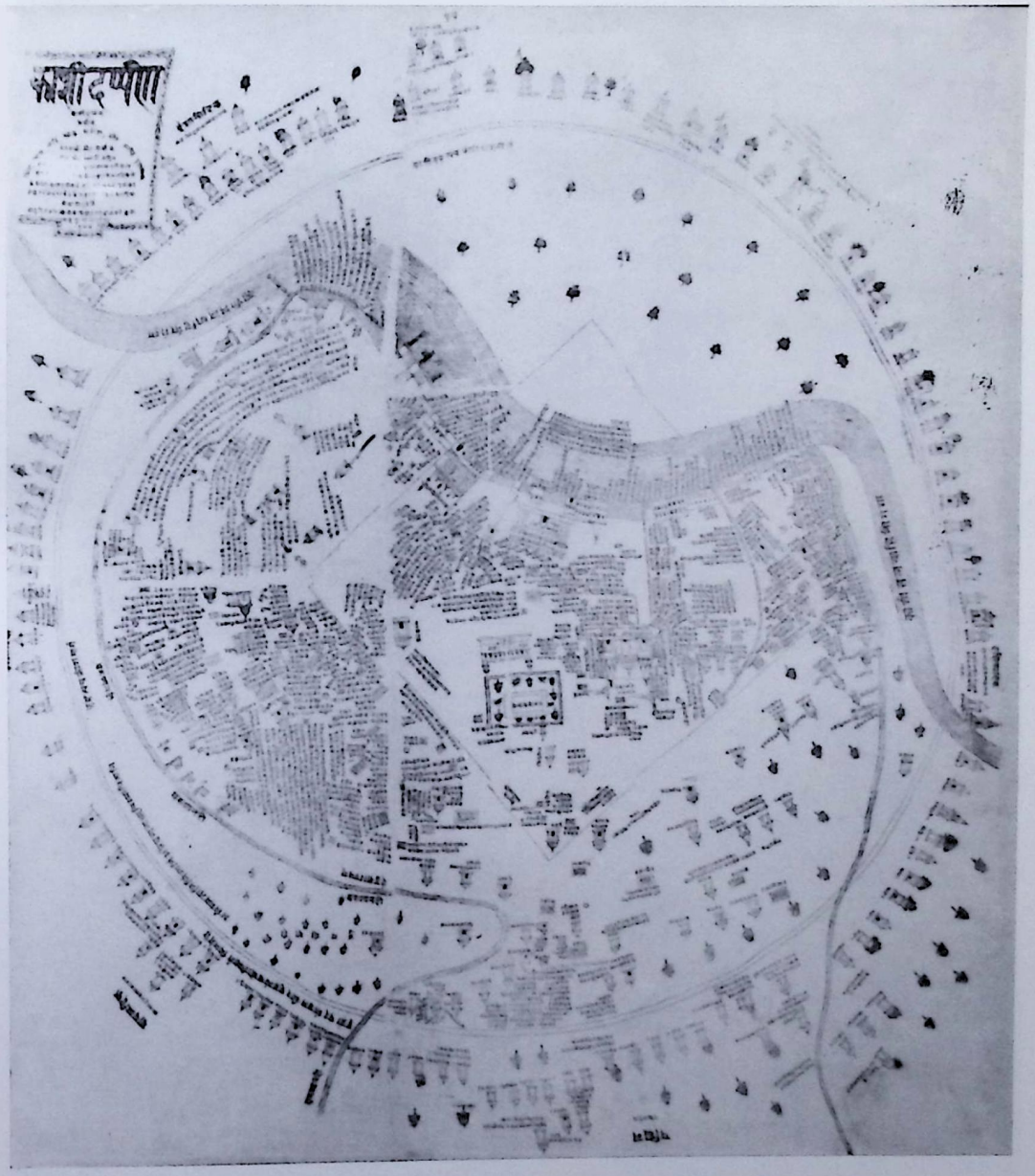

Kashidarpan (an old map showing the sacred sites of Varanasi)

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2. Golden Temple of Shri Vishwanatha

3. Entrance gate to the Annapurna Temple

4. Tablet on the wall of Naubatkhana of the Vishwanatha Temple constructed by order of Warren Hastings

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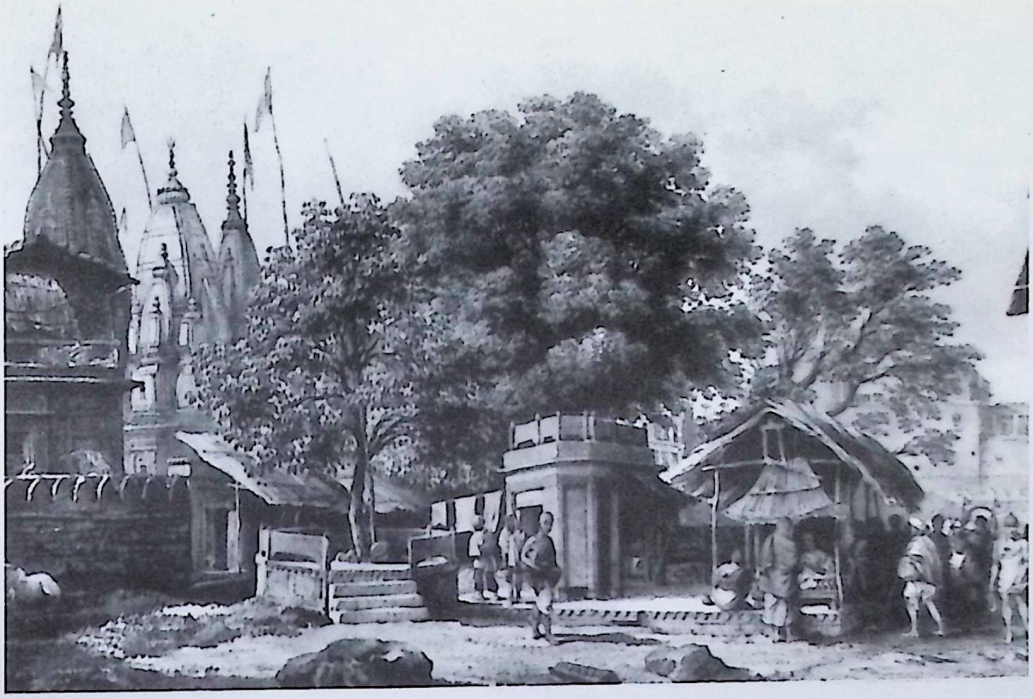
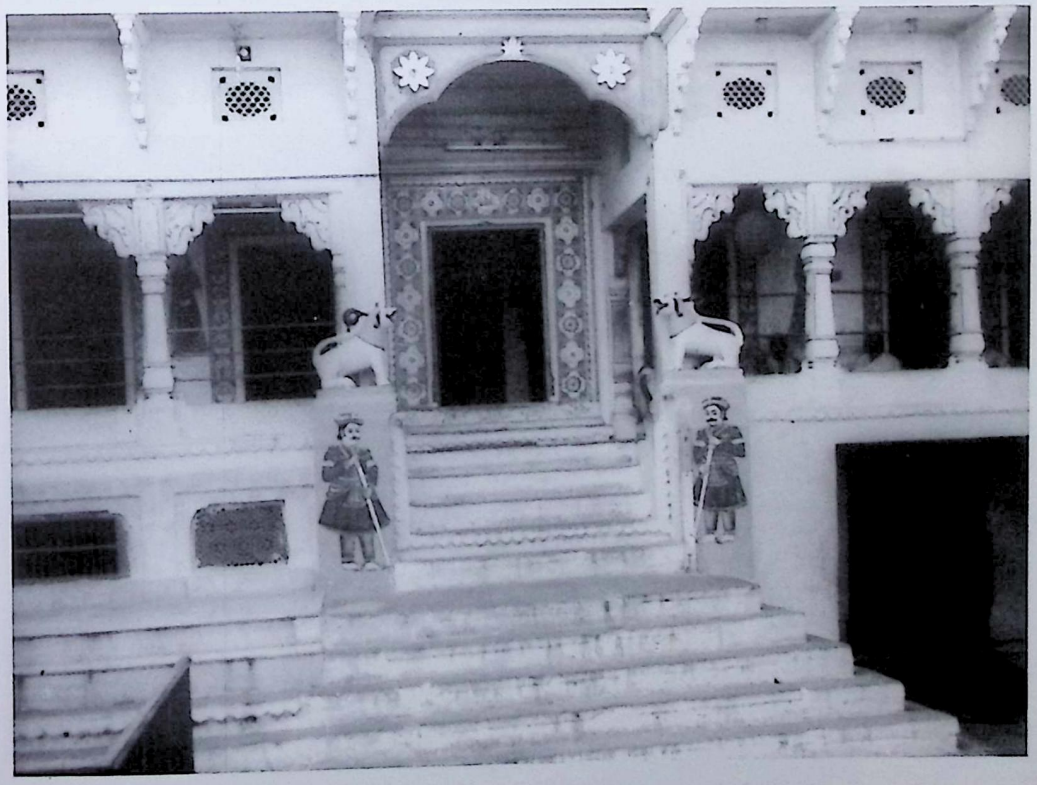


5. Jnanavapi : James Prinsep, 1831



6. Entrance Gate of Gopal Lalji's Temple

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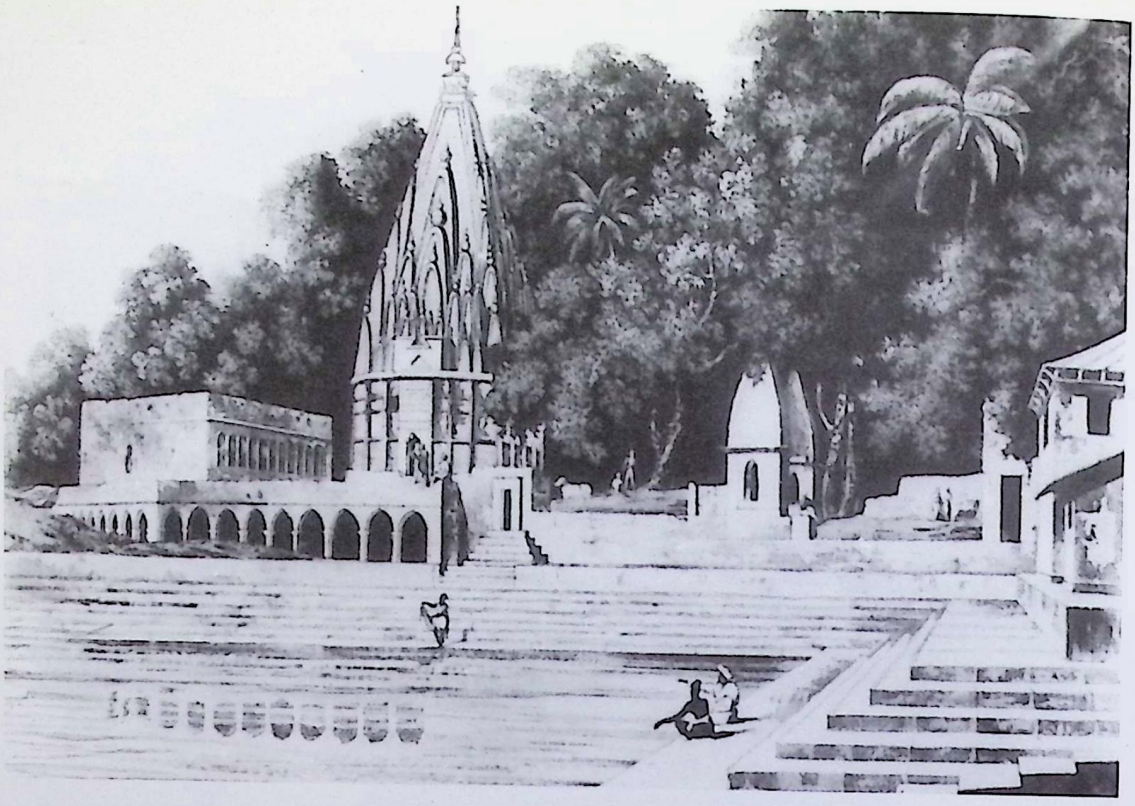
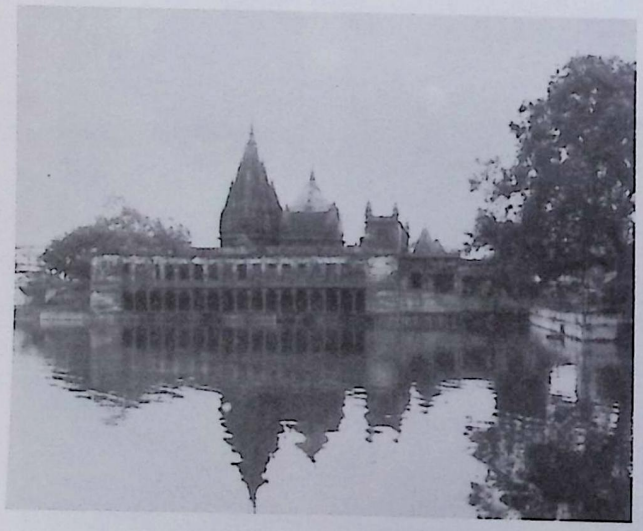


7. Durga Temple : T. Sutherland, 1824



8. Durga Kunda

9.Bell at the Durga Temple presented by the European Collector of Benares

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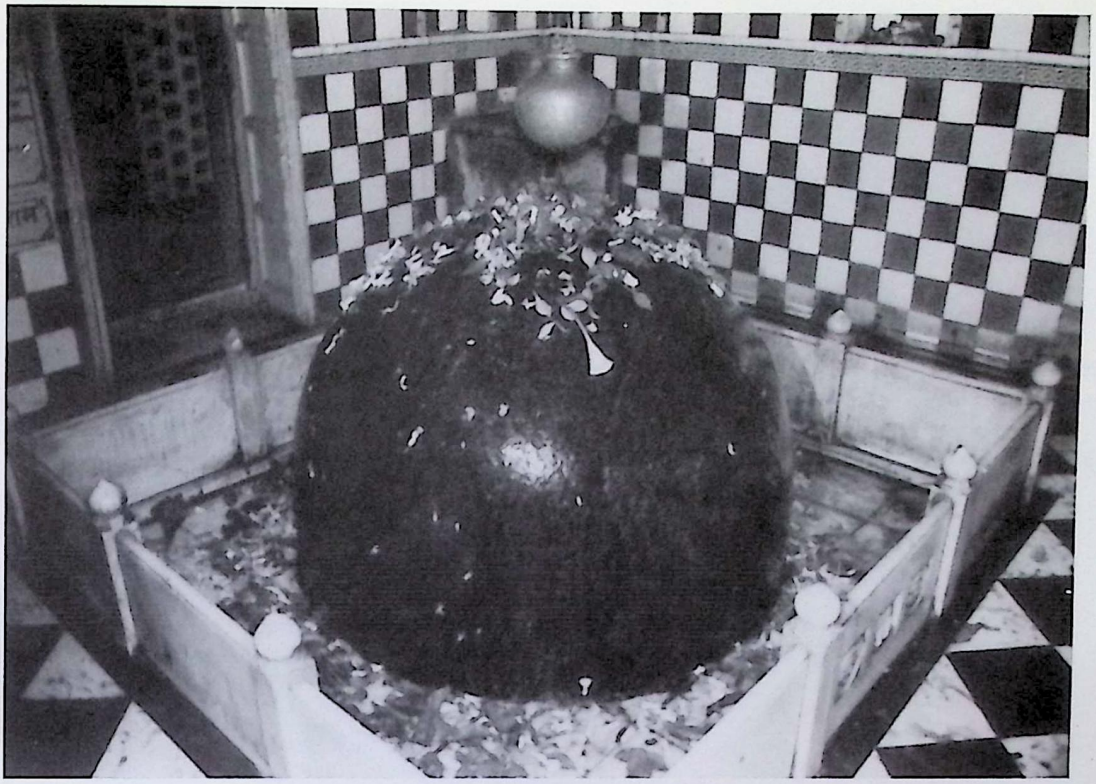

10. Shri Tilabhandeshwara

11. Old image of Goddess Durga : Puratan Durgabati

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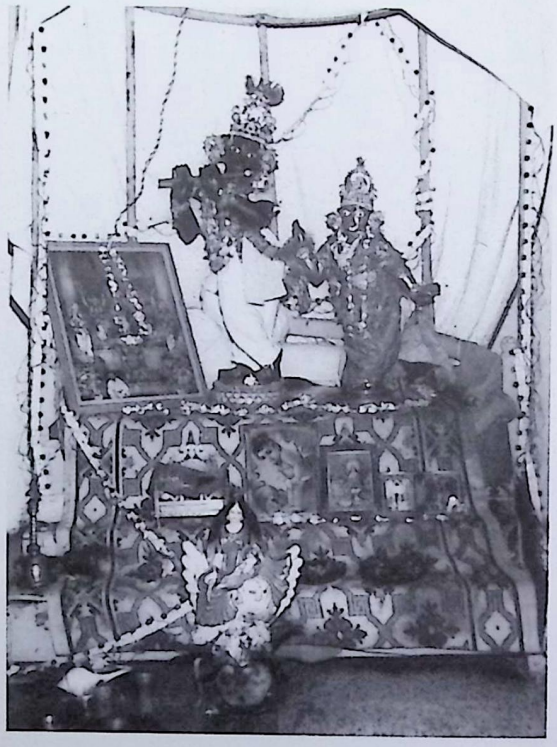
12. Concert Hall , Gurudhama



13. Krishna & Radha :
Gurudhama Temple

14. Gurudhama Temple :
a front view

15. Paduka Bhavan at Gurudhama

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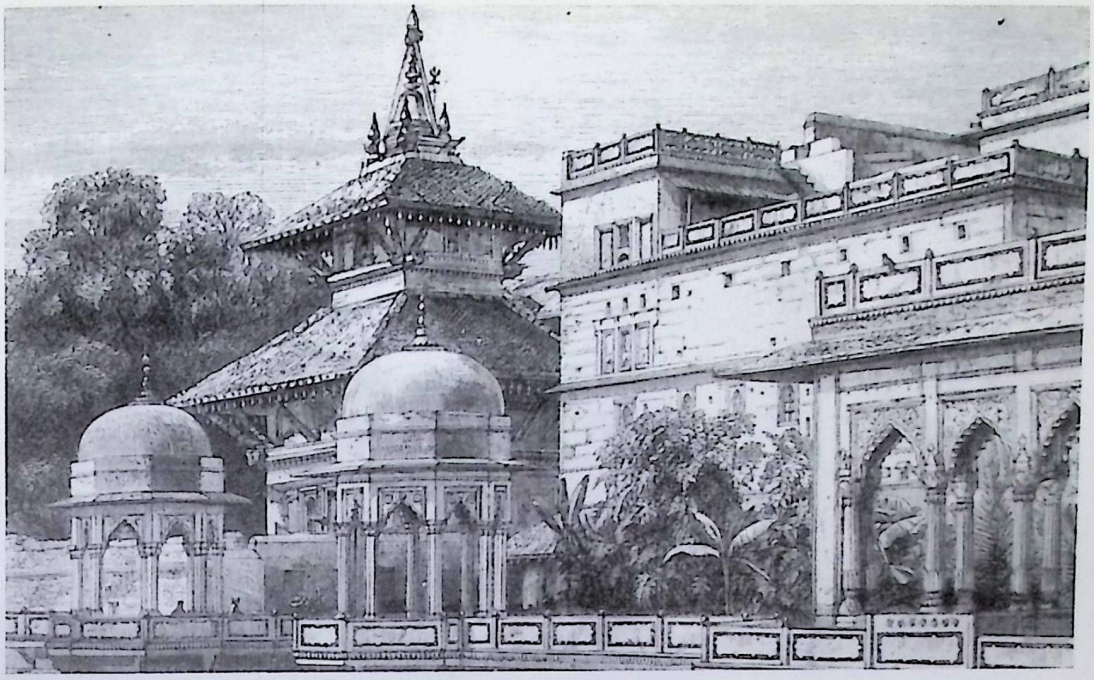

16. Pashupatishwara Temple, familiar as Nepali Mandir

17. Encampment of Sadhus : E.B. Havell, 1905

18. Panchakroshi Road : E.B. Havell, 1905

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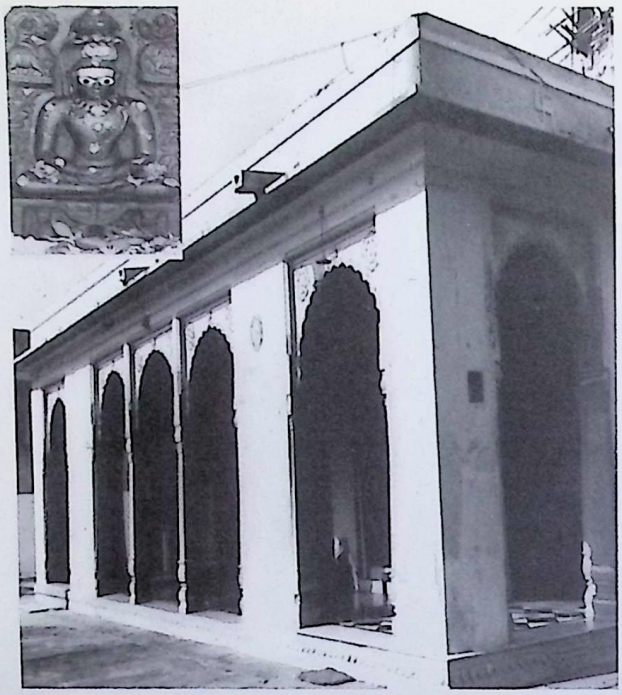
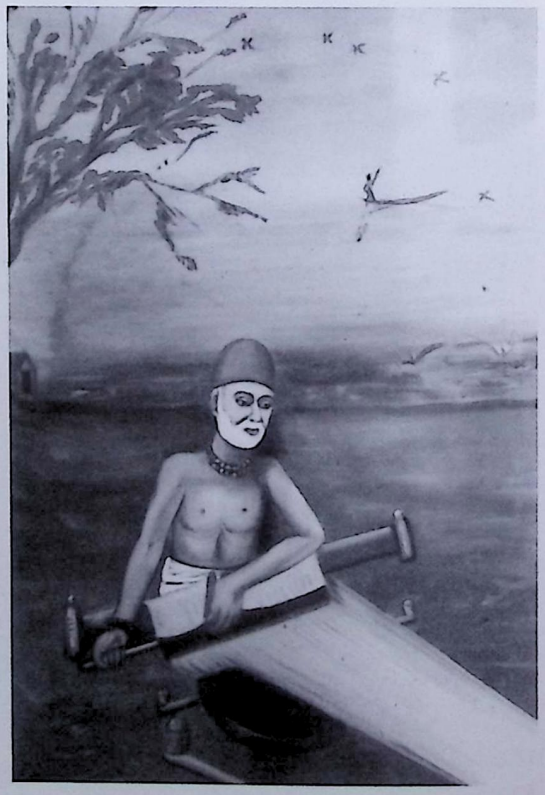


19. Jaina Temple at the birthplace of Parshvanatha
Inset : Image of Parshvanatha

20. Tulasidas

21. Interior of the Gurudwara at Gurubag, the place visited by Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism



22. Kabirdas

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CHAPTER VII

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

A NETWORK OF CELEBRATIONS

Varanasi being a meeting place of different social classes, religious sects and provincial communities of India witnessed the largest number of fairs (*mela*) and festivals (*utsava*) of any other city in India. Virtually the whole year was caught up in a network of various celebrations, which sometimes synchronized with each other. Some of the festivals in the City, like *Naga Panchami* and *Diwali*, date from far back in the past.[1] The observance of Diwali is mentioned in Jaina and Buddhist literature of the pre-Christian era.[2] Other festivals were introduced in course of time with people arriving from different provinces and the growing eminence of the City as a religious centre. As such, almost all of the festivals and fairs of nineteenth century Varanasi had been introduced here before the advent of the British.

HINDU FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The following is a month-by-month list of the Hindu fairs and festivals which were held during our period:

CHAITRA (March—April)

Navaratra of Chaitra : Festival of the 'nine nights' in the bright fortnight. The *Vikram Samvat*, begun in 58 B.C., was followed in the City as a year of reckoning, and accordingly, the new year in Varanasi started with the *shukla paksha*, the bright or waxing fortnight, popularly called, *sudi* in the month of *Chaitra*.

On the occasion of the New Year, people would visit the Devi temples, namely the temples of Annapurna, Sankata, Vagishwari, and especially, Durga Temple, from very early in the morning during the first nine nights of the month to receive blessings and favours.

The number of devotees visiting Durga Temple would rise to approximately ten thousand on the seventh and eighth days.[3] Goats were

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offered in sacrifice in this temple as an exception, as ordinarily, animal-sacrifice was not permitted in Varanasi.[4]

Gana-Gauri : The worship of Ganesha on the third day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra.[5] Mainly, Maḍwaris and Deshwalis (people from the territory of Jaipur and vicinity) would worship Gana-Gauri on this occasion. Idols of the male and the female deities were decorated and carried in procession to the bank of the Ganga generally by the women-folk who would split-up into groups and start singing. The idols were immersed in the Ganga in the afternoon of the sixth day of the bright fortnight. A fair was held at Rajmandir Ghat on this occasion.

Ramanavami : The ninth day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra dedicated to Sri Ramachandra, one of the divine incarnations of the Hindus born on that day. People would bathe at the Ram Ghat and worship Sri Rama in the neighbouring temple.[6]

VAISHAKH (April—May)

Narsingh-Chaudas (Nrisingha Chaturdashi) : The fourteenth day of the dark fortnight of *Vaishakh* is dedicated to Nrisingha Deva, also one of the divine incarnations of the Hindus who had appeared on that day. People would fast during the day in his honour. In the evening they would assemble in the Baḍa Ganesh Mahalla 'to witness the dramatic performance of the destruction or tearing to pieces of Hiranyakashipu by Narsingh.'[7] A fair was held there on this occasion.

JYAISHTHA (May—June)

Ganga-Saptami : The seventh day of the dark fortnight of *Jyaishtha*, dedicated to the Ganga, it being the day of her birth. The deity of Ganga was worshipped on the banks of the River. A big fair with dancing, introduced in 1850,[8] was attended by large crowds.

Dashera (Ganga Dashahara) : The tenth day of the bright fortnight of Jyaishtha, when the Ganga descended to earth. On this day a multitude of people would bathe in the Ganga and give alms to the Brahmins. Young girls, mostly belonging to the middle class, would float their dolls in the Ganga on this day and abstain from playing with them for the next few months.[9]

Nirjala Ekadashi (The eleventh day in the bright fortnight of Jyaishtha) : Also called *Chandan Ekadashi*, this day was observed by

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fasting.[10] Thousands of people would fast and swim in the Ganga with the help of buoyant *tumbi*, a dried gourd, often crossing the river. Sometimes celebrants would engage in mock fights with swords on the opposite bank, though this custom discontinued later on. After bathing, participants would be smeared with *chandan* (sandalwood paste). Cows were also bathed on this day and the *Ahirs*, belonging to the cowherd caste, were given special respect and offerings by the others.

Snan Yatra (The bathing festival of Lord Jagannatha) : This was celebrated on the *amavasya*, the last day of the dark fortnight of the month, in the Jagannatha Temple in Asi. The deity was formally bathed—on the pattern of the ceremony celebrated at the Jagannatha Temple in Puri—and towards the evening presented to the devotees. The fair held on this occasion, was thinly attended in the 1860s.[11] However, it continued later on also.*

ASHAḌH (June—July)

Ratha Yatra (The car festival of Lord Jagannatha) : This festival was possibly introduced here from the second day of the bright fortnight of the month in 1806.[12] It continued to be celebrated till the fourth day of the same month in the garden of Pandit Beni Ram, a *rais*. The idol of Jagannatha would be placed upon a chariot with a good number of wheels at Asi. From there the chariot was led to Beni Ram's garden for three successive days. The fair held on all these days was largely attended, especially on the last day when the number of votaries would rise to about thirty thousand.[13]**

Guru Purnima (Full moon day of *Ashaḍh* dedicated to Vyasadeva, the sage and great preceptor) : On this day, students and disciples, both lay and monastic, would ceremonially pay respectful homage to their teachers and preceptors.[14]

Batas Pariksha Mela (The fair on the occasion of prophesying the weather) : Again on the full moon day of Ashaḍh, astrologers of the City would meet at the Chauka Ghat over the Varuna River, and having ascertained the directions of the winds, would make weather forecasts. This custom was discontinued around the 1860s.[15]

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* See the entry of *Snanjatra* in the Table of Fairs of 1909, placed in the Appendix.

** At present the idols are carried on palanquins up to the Rathayatra crossing to be followed by installing the icons on the chariot.

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SHRAVAN (July—August)

Bathing at Shankudhara : The custom of bathing in the Shankudhara, a sacred tank, throughout the month of *Shravan* was held to be especially meritorious and on the last day of that month a fair was held at Shankudhara.[16] This fair was largely popular, but dancing, performed in the garden of Champat Rai, a rais, on this occasion was discontinued towards the second half of the nineteenth century. Though participation in the fair itself dwindled, it did not stop altogether.[17]*

Kedarnath Yatra : Devotees visit the Kedaranatha Temple at Kedar Ghat and worship the deity on each Monday of this month of Shravan. A fair would be held there on these days.[18]

Durga Yatra : A good number of votaries visited Durga Temple at Durga Kunda to worship the goddess Durga on every Tuesday of the month with the largest turnout on the last Tuesday. People would attend the fair here and then many would enjoy the big orchards and flower gardens situated nearby.[19]

Vriddhakala Yatra : Every Sunday in the month of Shravan, people visited Vriddhakala Temple to worship the deity. People suffering from diseases, especially of the skin, would take a dip in the Dhanwantari Kunda (a well named after Dhanwantari, the divine physician) and the Amrita Kunda (the well of nectar) situated there in the hopes of recovery.[20] A fair was held near the temple on these days.

Naga Panchami (The fifth day of the bright fortnight of Shravan dedicated to the serpent deity) : On this day people would bathe in the Nag Kuan and the fair held here on this occasion was attended by many. Images of snakes were bought on this day for worshipping at home. This day was also celebrated by wrestlers of the City, mostly belonging to the Ahir caste, by participating in bouts near Nag Kuan and also at other places around the City in the evening.[21]

Raksha Bandhan (Popularly called *Rakhibandhan*, the festival of tying a silk thread around the wrist) : This festival, held on the full moon day of Shravan, generally consisted of a custom in which sisters would tie a thread around the wrist of their brothers. This symbolizes the guarantee of affinity to and protection of the sister by the brother.

As early as the 1780s, Brahmins would purchase a great number of

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* See the entry of Shankudhara in the Table of Fairs of 1909 in the Appendix.

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Rakhis which were presented with their blessings to the people who in return gave them some money.[22]

BHADRAPADA (August—September)

Kajri or **Kajli Tij** (The third day of the dark fortnight of *Bhadra* dedicated to *Kajri*, a type of song generally sung during the rainy season—the months of Shravan and Bhadra) : This ceremony was mainly intended for women. On this day they would sing *Kajri*, dance and play music the whole night, and have fun by throwing mud at each other and visit the Shankudhara and Ishwargangi tanks. At the end of the celebration, they bathed in the Ganga. The fair took place at the above-mentioned places and was generally attended only by women.[23]

Janmashtami (Eighth day of the dark fortnight of Bhadra, when Sri Krishna, the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, was born) : This was observed both in temples and in private homes and was one of the most popular festivals of the City.[24]

Tila Tritiya or **Haritalika Tij** : This ritual, though uncommon in other places, was regularly performed in the City on the third day of the bright fortnight of the month exclusively by women, most of whom were *Purabiyas*. On the previous day they fasted and worshipped Hara-Gauri (Shiva and Durga) at night and then, after a nominal breakfast, would bathe in the Ganga early in the morning. Having returned home, they demanded new clothes from their husbands who would satisfy them and their children by presenting clothes and ornaments according to their capacity. If a husband was unwilling to give such presents, his wife, out of fun, sold him to another woman and purchased new clothes with the amount thus earned. Dressing up in their new clothes and ornaments, the women would visit and worship the goddess Mangala Gauri.[25]

Ganesha Chaturthi (Fourth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra dedicated to Ganesha who was born on this day) : This was observed mainly by the Maharashtrians who purchased clay[26] images of Ganesha from the market, placed them under a plantain tree at home and worshipped them with great devotion. Reading from the scriptures, especially the Vedas, and performances of both vocal and instrumental music were common in their houses. People visited the Baḍa Ganesha Temple on this day and attended the fair held near the temple.

A peculiar belief that was associated with this day was that if any

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person by chance gazed at the moon on this evening, he would face the risk of being falsely accused within the year. To avert such unpleasantness, it was customary for others to pelt the house of the person concerned with stones. This custom, which resulted in the throwing of stones at residential quarters, became almost obsolete towards the second half of the nineteenth century. In the event such pelting had taken place, on the day of *Ganesha Chauth*, the *tithi* was also called *Dhela* (a piece of stone or brick or concrete earth) *Chauth.*[27]

Lolarka Chhat (*Shashthi*) : This was the sixth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra dedicated to Lolarka, the Sun-god. On this day, mainly women would take a dip in the Lolarka Kunda in honour of the Sun-god. A big fair was also held at this site on this occasion.[28] A *mahalla* was named after this celebration fairly long ago.[29]

Lakshmi Kunda or **Shodahia Mela** (Sixteen-day Fair) : This fair was started on the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra, continued for sixteen days and ended on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of Ashvin. During this period, mainly women used to bathe in the Lakshmi Kunda and worship the goddess Lakshmi, installed nearby. The number of votaries peaked on the last day of the fair.[30]

Vamana Dwadashi (The twelfth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra dedicated to Vamana, one of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu born on this day) : Devotees would bathe at the confluence of the Ganga and Varuna rivers in the morning of this day and worship the deity of Vamana Keshava. They would then enjoy a dramatic performance on the theme of the Vamana and King Vali in Chitrakut in the evening.[31] A fair was also held at the Ganga-Varuna confluence on this occasion.

Ananta Chaturdashi (*Ananta Chaudash*) : This was the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra dedicated to Ananta, i.e. Vishnu. Devotees would fast on this day and a fair was held in Ramnagar, where the first Ramlila took place.[32]

ASHVIN (September—October)

Pitripakshiya Shraddha and **Tarpana** : This was a 'Ceremony of Libation'. 'The offering of water' during *tarpana* and the offering of water and food would be made during *shraddha* in memory of deceased ancestors during the dark fortnight of *Ashvin*. This was observed by many for a fortnight and the tarpana and shraddha were performed under the direction of Brahmin priests.[33]

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Ramlila (The folk stage play on the life of Rama, one of the divine incarnations of Lord Vishnu and hero of the epic *Ramayana*) : Celebrated throughout North India with great eclat and enthusiasm over a comparatively long period, *Ramlila* assumed special significance in Varanasi where *Ramacharitmanas*, a rendering of the epic Ramayana and a religious classic in Hindi, had been written by the saint-poet Tulsidas. This festival was held at the tail end of the rainy-season, when the weather had cooled and become more comfortable, and continued for a good number of days. The stage play of Ramachandra's divine life would be enacted in detail and was attended by a large segment of the Hindu community of the City, including the Raja of Varanasi.

Formerly, Ramlila used to take place in at least four places, including Asi and Chitrakut, and performances were held from the first day to the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Ashvin. Ramlila would culminate in an enactment of *Bharat Milap* (the meeting of Ramachandra with his devoted brother Bharata after fourteen years of the former's exile) and a fair at Nati Imli.[34] During the third-quarter of the nineteenth century, Ramlilas were held from the eighth day of the dark fortnight to the fifteenth day of the bright fortnight of Ashvin at numerous venues.[35]

Another major development in performance of Ramlilas was noticed when Raja Uditnarain of Varanasi inaugurated a Ramlila at Ramnagar in 1830. His son, Raja Ishwarinarain, organized a more pompous and elaborate event after succeeding his father in 1835.[36] The Ramnagar Ramlila used to start as early as the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra and continue for a month.[37]

New venues for Ramlila emerged in the City through the patronization of the rich.[38] In the early nineteenth century, Chitrakut* Ramlila, organized and financed by many chiefs, was the greatest of such festivals. There were at least eleven sites, including Chitrakut, where different scenes from the *Ramayana* were enacted for eleven days, one after another, in sequence. These were done according to the directions spelled out in scriptures.

The days and themes of these stage shows were as follows :

1st day : Birth of Ramachandra in Ayodhya.

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* Chitrakut is the name of a mahalla. It was so called since the episodes from Rama's life in the legendary Chitrakut region were enacted here.

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2nd day: The killing of Taḍaka, a *rakshasi* in the ashrama of Vishwamitra, the great sage.

3rd day: Wedding of Rama and Sita in the palace of Janaka in Mithila.

4th day: Preparation for the *abhisheka* of Rama as *Yuvaraja* (heir apparent); his fourteen-year-exile from Ayodhya by the conspiracy of his step-mother, Kaikeyi, also a queen; Rama goes off into the forest accompanied by Sita and his brother, Lakshmana.

5th day: The cutting off of Shurpanakha's nose, the sister of the Rakshasa King of Lanka, Ravana, by Lakshmana.

6th day: The killing of Khara and Dushana, the Ravana generals, by Rama.

7th day: The killing of Maricha, a *rakshasa* sent by Ravana and disguised as a golden deer, by Rama; and the kidnapping of Sita by Ravana.

8th day: Rama's friendship with Sugriva, the monkey chief, and killing of Bali, his brother the monkey-king, by Rama.

9th day: The search for Sita by Hanumana and his arrival in Lanka.

10th day: The killing of Ravana by Rama and the recovery of Sita.

11th day: The reunion of Sita, Rama and Lakshmana with Bharata, Rama's second brother, who was ruling Ayodhya on his behalf.[39]

It is interesting to note that on one occasion of Ramlila around 1810, a temporary bridge was constructed over the Varuna River near Chauka Ghat presumably to reenact scenes of the construction of a bridge over the sea and the invasion of Lanka by Rama.[40]

Vijaya Dashami Mela was held in the Chauka Ghat on the tenth day of the bright fortnight of Ashvin on the occasion of Ramachandra's killing of Ravana when thousands of people would attend the fair. While returning home, they would pick up a small quantity of earth from the site, treating it as golden spoils from Lanka.[41]

The scene of Bharat Milap, the meeting of Ramachandra with Bharata in Chitrakut, would be enacted at Nati Imli on the last day of the Ramlila. This performance was just as popular in the early nineteenth century as it is today. Thousands of people would throng there to witness this holy and touching scene with the utmost devotion. A large and elaborately

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decorated *vimana* with thirty-two bearers would carry the actors; Ramachandra, Sita, Lakshmana, Bibhishana, Jambubana, Hanumana, Sugriva, and Angada, to the site of the performance. As the vimana moved slowly along, people would shout Rama's name and throw flowers towards the cast until they reached the site of the performance. Tumultuous sounds of various types of musical instruments like *turi, bheri, sanai, tikara, damama, veena* and waving of large flags would make the atmosphere all the more festive and colourful. Shortly after the cast of characters descended the vimana, the long awaited re-union between Ramachandra and Bharata would take place as they warmly embraced amidst the thunderous sounds of joy from the large, enthusiastic audience.[42]

The early popularity of the Ramlila continued to increase during our period, and with the participation of the rich, it expanded in the 1860s. Reverend Sherring, who witnessed this festival observes in this regard :

> '... there was a great deal of pomp and oriental splendour connected with it, and native gentlemen used to vie each other in the amount of tinsel and tawdry they could display on the occasion of Ramlila.'[43]

Navaratra of **Ashvin** : Like *Chaitra Navaratra, Ashvin Navaratra* was also observed for nine days from the first to the ninth day of the bright fortnight of Ashvin. During the seventh, eighth and ninth days, Maharashtrian and Gujarati girls from twelve- to twenty-years-old would dress-up and visit various temples where they would make a tree of fifty-one *pradipas* (earthen lamps) and dance and sing the *Garba*, the witnessing of which is prohibited for men.[44]

A fair used to take place on all these days at the Durga Kunda and the Durga Temple which many people visited.[45] We get a rare picture of this fair of 1830-31 from the Polish traveller Malachowski when he writes :

> 'On a certain evening we went to see the goddess Durga Puja festival which was being celebrated in spacious place outside the City. More or less the whole of Benares seemed to have gathered at this place and a multitude of people from the surroundings also seemed to have accumulated. The bustle and clamour was going on to such an extent as we could hear only in India. We could hardly push through the crowd of spectators present there, mounted on elephants, camels, and horses. No accident however happened in spite of the absence of any kind of supervision. But the celebration was the same as in the case of all their religious festivals similar to fairs and shows as well as for the important act of worshipping the deity. Sales went on of flowers, fruits, sweetmeats, which are loved in the entire East, strings of beads and toys for children which could be kept in Nurenberg store.
>
> In another place, the merry worshippers of the goddess were attracted by

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Seesaws. Only the Goddess Durga, moulded by young children, sat on a car. She had a corona on her head and was surrounded by Brahmins who accepted rich presents for Her. Music, dancing, and songs resounded all round. I reflected upon the good luck and merriness of these people who had collected in such a crowd and made merry with such zeal without seeking the aid of any stimulation with strong drink. Bengal fireworks were lighted in many places. Of these some were really beautiful, namely the blazing ball which revolved in the air for a long time and lastly vanished above the City. The festive celebration ended with firing of mortar (canons).'

Durga Puja (Worship of Goddess Durga) : The worship of the image of Durga, which was popular among the Bengalees of the City initially, but later among other local Hindu communities also, commenced on the sixth day of the bright fortnight of Ashvin and continued for another three days. There would be an immersion ceremony on the tenth day, when the images were taken out of their abodes and a procession would take them to Dashashwamedh Ghat in the afternoon. The images would be immersed in the Ganga in presence of a large crowd in the evening. The details of this puja were similar to those in Bengal, except that there was no sacrifice of animals before the deity, which was allowed only in the Durga Temple at Durga Kunda.[46] With the immersion, a fair would take place around Dashashwamedh Ghat.[47] *

Shami Puja : Worship of the *Shami* tree used to be held on the tenth day of the bright fortnight of Ashvin.[48]

KARTIK (October—November)

Tulasi Vivaha (The marriage of Lord Vishnu with the bride of the holy Basil plant, especially venerated by the Vaishnavas) : This ceremony was celebrated by the Maharashtrians on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight of *Kartik*. An image of '*Bala* Krishna', the child Krishna, was placed in a beautiful swing and carried in the streets during the night, which was followed by a marriage party of devotees. Elaborate arrangements for illumination and fireworks were also made on this occasion. Finally, the whole party, with the bridegroom, reached the house of Tulasi where the marriage ceremony was performed and the devotees passed the whole night in great jubilation.[49]

Dhan Teras (*Dhan Trayodash*, the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of the month dedicated to *dhan*, wealth) : This was observed especially by

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* Other details regarding this celebration have been dealt with in Chapter XVI—The Bengalees and Varanasi.

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mahajans (money-lenders and merchants) who worshipped Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune, this night. Vessels made of brass, copper and other metals were displayed in the beautifully illumined shops of Thatheri Bazar. Exhibits of earthen images were also arranged in the shops of Chowkhamba Bazar on this occasion. People, especially the rich, customarily purchased metal vessels in Thatheri Bazar on this day.[50]

Hanumana Yatra or **Jayanti** (Celebration of Hanumana's reporting to Bharata about the return of Lord Rama after a fourteen-year-exile or, according to some, the birthday celebration of Hanumana) : This was celebrated on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight of Kartik when people used to visit the temples of Hanumana situated in the wards of Mir Ghat and Bhadaini.[51]

As a prevention against disease, after rubbing one's body with scented oil and a ceremonial bath in warm water, people would worship the waning crescent of the moon.[52] People would also wear their winter clothes for the first time on this occasion.

Bhuta Chaturdashi (The fourteenth day of the dark fortnight of Kartik dedicated to departed souls) : People celebrated this occasion at night by placing lamps in every suitable spot of their houses in honour of departed souls.

Diwali (*Dipavali*—Festival of lights on the last day of the dark fortnight of Kartik) : People decorated their houses with lights, and as one European traveller of our period describes :

> 'The City appears like the creation of the fire-king, the view from the water affording the most superb and romantic spectacle imaginable. The outlines of a whole city are marked in streams of fire, and the coruscations of light shoot up into the dark blue sky above, and tremble in long undulations on the rippling waves below.'[53]

Diwali was and continues to be one of the most popular festivals and a great occasion for the shopkeepers, who sell varieties of sweetmeats, coloured toys made of sugar and pretty clay images.[54] It was also a custom to distribute sweetmeats among friends, relatives and the destitute on the occasion of Diwali. Gambling was another popular custom of the City connected with this festival.[55] The *Annakuta* festival, during which a huge stockpile of rice and other food was offered to goddess Annapurna in her temple and to Shiva in the Vishwanatha Temple on the first day of the bright fortnight of Kartik, must also have been held at this time.

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Lakshmi Puja and **Shyama Puja** (Worship of goddesses Lakshmi and Shyama or Kali) : Both Lakshmi and Shyama[56] were worshipped on the night of *amavasya*, the last day of the dark fortnight of Kartik, but the worship of Shyama was performed only by local Bengalees.[57]

Yama Dwitiya (The second day of the bright fortnight of Kartik dedicated to Yama, the Lord of death) : This was a festival of mutual love and affection between brothers and sisters.[58] Brothers would bathe at Yama Ghat and then visit their sisters' houses to receive a *tilaka*, a holy mark on the forehead—a sign of blessing, dine and in return give gifts to her. A fair was held at Yama Ghat on this occasion.

Kartiki Snan and **Kartiki Purnamasi** : Bathing in the Ganga at the Panchaganga Ghat (where five rivers were believed to have met) throughout the months of Kartik, was considered to be especially sacred. Innumerable devotees of all descriptions used to set out for the Ganga holding lamps, for it was still dark, while musical instruments, especially *shahnai* and *tikara*, were played on the ghat. The holy bath, thus started, continued for some time. In the evening they would light lamps on the banks of the Ganga and also place lamps burning with ghee (clarified butter) in the temples of Vishwanatha, Annapurna, and others.[59]

Shops with various goods were set up on the street leading to Panchaganga Ghat and were crowded with buyers of brass- and bronze-ware, earthen pots, iron and wooden articles, toys, miscellaneous stationery goods and spices.[60]

The fair ended on the *purnima* (full moon) of Kartik when countless people took a morning bath in the Ganga and illumined the site of the ghat with innumerable lamps in the evening, which must have presented a rare sight of beauty.[61] Boxing matches once took place on this occasion too, but were discontinued later.[62]

Krishnalila (The playing of Krishna, one of the Hindu incarnations of God, and the *Rasayatra*, a circular dance performed by Krishna and the *gopis*, or milkmaids, his female devotees) : In the same month of Kartik, especially during the bright fortnight, an enactment of the sporting of Krishna, individually[63] or collectively with the gopis,[64] was performed in the City. Dr H. H. Wilson, the famous Indologist who lived in the City sometime in the first half of the nineteenth century, leaves the following precise and valuable account of the Krishnalila fair at Shivapur in Varanasi :

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'The chief dancers and musicians, ranging themselves under the banners of the most celebrated of the professions, go out in formal procession; tents, huts and booths are erected, swings and roundabouts form a favourable amusement of the crowd, and sweetmeats and fruits, are displayed in tempting profusion: the whole has the character of a crowded fair in Europe, and presents, in an immense concourse of people, an endless variety of rich costume, and in infinite diversity of picturesque accompaniment, a most lively and splendid scene.'[65]

Nagnathaiya, an enactment of Krishna's plunging into the river Yamuna, inhabited by Kaliya, the snake, his subduing and, finally, his dancing on the hood of the serpent, held amidst a large crowd of devotees, was also a very old part of the festival of Krishnalila at Tulsi Ghat at Asi. Still another Krishna Lila of Chauka Ghat, according to Sherring's information, was however discontinued.

MARGASHIRSHA or AGRAHAYAN (November—December)

Piyala Mela : This was celebrated for one day on the first Tuesday-Saturday of the month of *Margashirsha*, when one segment of the working class would offer intoxicants to the local deities of Kalka and Sahaja at Chauka Ghat and then march to Shivapur where they were reported to have indulged in revelry throughout the night.[66]

Panchakroshi Mela : On the occasion of the pilgrims' circumambulation of Varanasi, or the *Panchakroshi Yatra*, in the dark fortnight of the month, a fair used to take place on the seventh and eighth days of the same fortnight in Shivapur, where residents met the pilgrims and all rejoiced together.[67]

Pishachamochana Yatra and **Lota Bhanta Mela** : A great fair used to take place at Pishachmochan when scores of votaries bathed in the sacred Pishachmochan Kunda on the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight of the month and eat *roti*, an indigenous bread with roasted *bhanta* (brinjals).[68] Possibly roti and bhanta became corrupted into *lota bhanta* of the Lota Bhanta Mela.[69]

Some classes of people, especially aristocrats, visited the same site on the fourteenth day of the dark and bright fortnights of *Poush* for performing religious rites.[70]

Nagara Pradakshina : A fair was held at Chauka Ghat and Badhiya (Bakriya) Kunda on the full moon day of *Agrahayan* when devotees undertook a two-day circumambulation of the City.[71]

MAGH (January—February)

Ganesha Chauth (*Chaturthi*) (The fourth day of the dark fortnight of

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Magh dedicated to Ganesha) : This day people visited the temple of Baḍa Ganesha and attended the fair held there. There was a custom among the students of Sanskrit to stand in the temple-precincts the whole day, from sunrise to sunset, praying for divine grace to attain proficiency in their studies.[72]

Vedavyasa Yatra : Each Monday of the month of Magh, large numbers of devotees, including residents of Varanasi, visited the temple of Vedavyaseshwara Shiva in Ramnagar where a fair was also held. Fair attendance ended on the last Monday of the month.[73]

PHALGUN (February—March)

Shivaratri (The last night of the dark fortnight of *Phalgun*, dedicated to Lord Shiva) : One can well imagine how enthusiastically and devotedly people would observe this night in Varanasi, the City of Shiva. They bathed in the Ganga and fasted on this day in His honour. Visiting Vishwanatha Temple to pay obeisance to Him was a must and, consequently, the temple and its surroundings were jam-packed night and day. Having visited Vishwanatha first, the faithful proceeded to Vaidyanatha and the other temples of Shiva.[74] The singing of songs and chanting of hymns in praise of Shiva and dancing were also very common on that day.[75]

Holi (The festival of colour) : This well-known Hindu festival was performed almost from the first day of the bright fortnight of Phalgun when people were heard singing songs of *Holi* here and there.[76] The number of participants started multiplying from the eleventh day when an altar with logs, flowers and coloured powder was set up and crowds danced and sang around it. *Holika*, or wood, dried leaves, etc., purchased through donations of local residents were heaped on street crossings in different wards and set alight on the night of the fifteenth, the full moon night of Phalgun, and enthusiastic revelers passed the whole night around the fire.[77] The next morning, the first day of the dark fortnight of Chaitra, they smeared themselves with Holika ashes. Then they would wear coloured clothing[78] and visit temples to offer *abir* to the deities therein.[79] Meanwhile, the playful and indiscriminate throwing of coloured water and powder on themselves and bystanders alike continued till the afternoon.

In the afternoon, people would assemble at Dashashwamedh Ghat and, in great fun, indulge in the mutual application of *abir*, a special type of sanctified red-coloured powder, affecting an exchange of love and

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affection among the attendees. People also would visit the temple of Chaushatti Devi to pay obeisance to her.[80] On this occasion, fairs took place at the Dashashwamedh and Chaushatti Ghats.[81] The wealthy would sponsor performances by vocal and instrumental musicians and jesters during this festival.[82]

Buḍhwamangal (The festival of the last Tuesday of the Samvat year—*Buḍha* meaning old and *Mangala*, Tuesday) : On the Tuesday following the Holi festival, it was customary to visit Durga Temple and then attend the Buḍhwamangal festival.[83] This much-talked-about festival or water fete was unique to Varanasi. It would be held on the Ganga with a flotilla of beautifully decorated and illumined boats loaded with revelers drifting along the current in a gala mood. There would be both vocal and instrumental music and dancing on the boats for hours by artists of all descriptions. This festival of music, or more appropriately, festival of boats, was witnessed and enjoyed by thousands of onlookers along the ghats and banks of the Ganga. Consequently, this festival assumed a special character among the festivals of the City and became famous in the cultural history of the City for superb musical performances, gorgeous and colourful sights, and above all, for the novelty of this display in the wonderful and panoramic backdrop of the river and the riverfront.

There are differences of opinion about the origin of this festival and its later development. According to one school, the festival was devised by Mir Rustam Ali, the Governor of the City around 1735; while according to another, it was devised by Raja Chet Singh and fostered by Fatehchand, the great grandfather of Bharatendu Harishchandra, the famous Hindi writer of the City.[84] This festival, according to the *Benares Gazette* of 1909, 'owes its origin to the expiation that either Raja Balwant Singh or Chet Singh had to make to the Ganges for having caused the death of an innocent Brahmin'.[85] But James Prinsep, who had lived in Varanasi in the early eighteenth century and knew the City intimately, held a different opinion :[86]

> 'When Meer Roostum Ali held the Soobah of Benares, under the Vizier of Oude, he lived on the banks of the River (on the Meer Pushta, built by himself) and that Raja Balwant Singh took to celebrating the hoolee on the river perhaps out of compliment, that he might enjoy the view from his window; but the name of the day augurs greater antiquity of the institution.'

Whatever the facts may be, the Rajas of Varanasi played a vital role in this festival, either as its founders or promoters, cannot be doubted.

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Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal left a detailed account of the Budhwamangal festival of the early nineteenth century.[87] He stated that people getting dressed in costly and beautiful garments of various descriptions and also wearing valuable ornaments used to visit the Durga Temple by palanquin and chariot, or on horse and elephant or on foot and after that visit most of them went to the confluence of Asi and Ganga, boarded the boats of different sizes and names, such as, *Patala, Bajra, Pinis, Dingi,* and rarely, *Mayurpankhi* and *Ghorhdourh.* Then these boats moved slowly to and fro from the Ganga-Asi confluence to the Panchaganga Ghat. In some boats singers, accompanied by a band of musical instruments, such as the *sarengi, vanshi, sitar, mridanga, mandira, rabab, veena, tanpura, muchanga, dindim, khanjani, dholok,* etc., rendered *ragas*; while in others the *bhans* and *bhanḍs* (the jesters) and the reciters performed their art, and in still others, girls danced. Merchants in their river vessels sold varieties of sweetmeats and food, betel and tobacco, and intoxicants like *bhang* and *ganja* to customers also in boats.

We get yet another firsthand and lively account of this festival from Prinsep in his *Benares Illustrated* in which he records :

> 'On the first Tuesday, after the Holee, the worship of Doorga is prescribed in the *Kashee-Khund* partly in consequence of which and partly from the desire to protract every holiday amusement as much as possible a large *Mela* assembles on this day, in the neighbourhood of *Doorga Koond.* Although there is no bathing in the *Talao*, the attendance is generally greater than on the real festival of Doorga in the month of *Asin.* The garden walls from *Bheloopoor* to the tank, constructed with balcony terraces of stone, are seen covered with well-dressed spectators, while those, who can sport a *suwaree*, prefer moving in the crowd, on richly caparisoned horses and elephants. There is no regular procession, but parties of strolling actors, dressed up as *Jogees*, with earth rubbed over their faces and bunches of peacock feathers in their hands; or disguised as dancing women, as *Chumarins, Sootrasuhees*, and *Musulman fuqueers* ply to and fro, dancing and singing. Sometimes different groups oppose one another in the recitation of verses, and the public acclamation awards the victory ....
>
> When the evening approaches, the crowd adjourns to the banks of the river, which now begins to afford one of the prettiest spectacles of which the fetes of *Kasshee* can boast ....
>
> The whole river is covered with boats of all descriptions, fitted out with platforms and conopies covered with white cloth and lighted with variegated lamps, torches, and blue lights. The rich merchants and such as can afford it, hire parties of singing and nach girls or male buffoons and dancing boys to exhibit before the guests invited to pass the night upon their boats. Those who cannot pay for a Nach themselves gather their boats around the more fortunate ones where such amusement

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is going forward, and subscribe their mite when the dancer or singer turns toward them. At about 9 o'clock, the Raja's large *pinnace* floats down from *Ramnugur* and takes its place off the middle of town : the Raja himself, however, generally prefers rowing about incognito, in his *sonamookhee*, smoking his *hooqqu*, and listening to some favourite warbler in the service of a more fortunate master. Year after year, did he thus follow, with longing eyes the celebrated *Hingun*, a singer of some merit, upon whom a merchant of the town lavished all his fortune. When this man was at last ruined, she reluctantly consented to enter the Raja's service so that she might in her turn support her former admirer.

The most conspicuous object or that which most strikes an European spectator, is the Raja's state bed, with its mosquito curtains exalted on the roof of his pinnace. I do not believe he ever uses it, for the show lasts without intermission, until noon of the day following. Of course there are pastry cook, or *Hulwaee* boats, in abundance, where "all hot, all hot" is the order of the night ....'

This proverbial boat festival gave birth to many popular anecdotes and fired the imagination of writers who presented passionate accounts of it or referred to it in their literary works.[88]

Dangal: Around the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, another boat festival used to take place, perhaps at the instance of the Raja of Varanasi. Celebrated as Dangal[89] and modelled after the Budhwamangal, it was held on Thursday and confined within the temple of Jagannatha over the Asi Ghat on the west and fort of Ramnagar on the east.

OTHER FAIRS

Solar and Lunar Eclipses : Big fairs were also held during solar and lunar eclipses[90] and other favourable conjuctions of planets, when people would bathe in the thousands, mainly in the Ganga and other sacred tanks like Kurukshetra Talao during the solar eclipse.[91] James Prinsep gives the following description of such occasions : 'For two or three days previous to such an event, pilgrims and travelling parties from the country around, frequently even from greater distances, begin to assemble in groups upon the terraces and balconies of the temples and houses near the river. Every vacant spot is put in requisition and hired out by the square foot.'[92] Interestingly enough, according to Prinsep's records, 'even the Khadim of the Minaret-mosque does not scruple, for a *consideration* of about 200 rupees to throw open the *suhun* or floor of the Masjid for the accommodation of the Children of Superstition.'

We have already mentioned in Chapter IV that Prinsep calculated the number of bathers during a lunar eclipse in May 1826 at approximately

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fifty five thousand people. The concourse at this eclipse was rather small and by no means to be compared with that of November 1825, when the crowd was unusually great and 'no less than forty lives were lost in the press of bathers at the first glimpse of the moon's obscured visage'.[93]

Special bathing on the occasion of the Ganga-Matsyodari Yoga, etc. : Bathing in a particular tank was also considered especially sacred on some occasions when, owing to the rising water levels during the rainy season, the Ganga spilled over into the sacred tanks of the Matsyodari via the Varuna or, the Puskhar via Asi, or the Kurukshetra through a channel. On those occasions when fairs coincided with the high waters of the rainy season multitudes of bathers would be seen at these tanks.[94] The instance of such flooding, especially the meeting of the Ganga with the Matsyodari, though rare, caused great inconvenience to residents throughout those localities.[95]

Besides those mentioned above, other rituals, festivals and fairs during the period—any reference to which though not found in the old records examined[96] hitherto existed in the recent past and had presumably existed even before—are listed below :

VAISHAKH (April—May)

Panchakroshi Pilgrimage : This pilgrimage, which could be undertaken at any time, was especially undertaken during Agrahayan and Vaishakh.

Shitala Ashtami : This was observed on the eighth day of the dark fortnight of Vaishakh and was dedicated to Shitala, the goddess of small pox.

Vaishakhi Amavasya : The fifteenth day of the dark fortnight of Vaishakh was especially sacred for ablutions and other religious rites.

Akshaya Tritiya : The third day of the bright fortnight of Vaishakh was also an auspicious day for performing religious rites and starting certain works.

SHRAVAN (July—August)

Jhulea (The festival of swinging) : This was celebrated on the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Shravan when the deity of Lord Krishna was made to swing in magnificently decorated swings in some temples, both private and public.

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ASHVIN (September—October)

Jivatputrika or **Juitia** or **Jitashtami** : The eighth day of the dark fortnight of Ashvin was observed by mothers as a day of fasting and prayer for the welfare of their children.

MARGASHIRSHA (November—December)

Bhairavashtami : The eighth day of the dark fortnight of Margashirsha dedicated to Kala Bhairava was observed with great grandeur in the Kala Bhairava Temple as the anniversary of the appearance of Kala Bhairava on earth.

PAUSH (December—January)

Nara-Narayana Puja : The deity, which had been installed near the Mahtha Ghat (near Trilochan Ghat), was worshipped on the full moon day of the month of Paush.

MAGH (January—February)

Vasanta Panchami : This was celebrated on the fifth day of the bright fortnight of Magh, when people would worship Shiva and Parvati at home and offer yellow *dupattas* to Shiva and they themselves would wear the same.

On the same day Saraswati, the goddess of learning, was also worshipped.

Maghi Purnima Mela : Bathing at Prayag Ghat throughout the month of Magh was considered sacred. On the full moon day of the same month, innumerable devotees bathed at Prayag Ghat and Dashashwamedh Ghat and visited Prayageshwara Temple, situated over Ahalya Bai Ghat.

PHALGUN (February-March)

Amlaki Ekadashi or **Rangbhari Ekadashi** : On the eleventh day of the bright fortnight of Phalgun, *abir* and *gulal* (red powder) were offered to Vishwanatha.

Gulab Baḍi : This appellation literally means a rejoicing in which a hall is decorated with roses. This celebration, which was common among *rais* and restricted to their friends and associates, used to take place two weeks after the Budhwamangal. An elaborate arrangement of musical performances throughout the night was made on this occasion, and presumably, the garden-houses of the aristocrats were the venues of such performances.

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VIEW OF THE CITY DURING HINDU FESTIVALS

We have already reported a short description of the fairs, so here we are quoting a general observation left by a European onlooker on how the City appeared during some of the festivals of 1839 :

> 'Of the scene which Benares exhibits during the Doorga Puja, and other religious festivals, it is altogether beyond the power of words to convey any just idea. The temple and other buildings painted and decorated with flags for the occasions, appear to stand in a rolling sea of human beings, so dense is the mass of pilgrims which obstructs the narrow streets, and spreads itself over every spot of ground where there is room for the foot to rest. The deafening shouts and screams and blowing of horns,etc.,are also heard....'[97]

This description in fact corroborates other contemporary accounts wherein mention of the number of participants at some fairs has been made in the thousands.[98]

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS OF THE MUSLIMS

The Muslims, who are believers and worshippers of a formless God, are far less ritualistic and have far fewer festivals in comparison with the Hindus. Again, these festivals are also not universally participated in, as example, the Sunni sect of the Muslims does not take part in the Muharam festival, rather, they abhor it. Muharam is largely attended by the Shiahs. Moreover, only in rare cases is there a tradition of a fair being held on the occasion of Muslim festivals.

So, though numerically Muslims are second only to Hindus in Varanasi, comparatively they had far fewer fairs and festivals. Unfortunately, we have only a few accounts of these fairs and festivals during our period, which are listed below :

Muharram : This was a great festival of the Shiah sect of local Muslims when they would set out in a long and colourful procession. Prinsep gives the following account of Muharram :

> 'For ten days in the month of *Mohurrum*, the Moosulmans are seen clad in green and black, their trappings of woe, in commemoration of the martyrdom of HUSUN and HOOSYN, the sons of ULEE, and grandsons of the Prophet. HUSUN was killed in battle on the plain of Kerbela, A.D. 600; his elder brother is supposed to be have poisoned some time after at Medina. The circumstances attending the death of the Imams are recited at night in all the musjeeds belonging to the Shia sect, which comprehends most of the lower orders in Benares. The piteous tale is chaunted in the current language by people hired, apparently for their strength of lungs, who work themselves and their audience by degrees into a phrenzy of grief; tearing their hair, beating their breasts, and crying "Hoosyn, Hoosyn" until quite exhausted.'[99]

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Though this procession was witnessed by local residents with interest, there were, however, instances of confrontation between Hindus and Muslims when the Muharram procession would coincide with the Charrak Puja of the Hindus.*

Ghazi Miyan ka Mela : This fair which was held on the first Sunday of the month of Jyaishtha at Bakariya Kunda and was dedicated to a Muslim named Syed Masud Ghazi, awarded the title of Gazi in appreciation of his killing of *kafirs*, i.e., persons belonging to other religious faiths. This fair was attended by the Muslims and, surprisingly, also by the Hindus who would not bother about its origin.

Fatman ka Mela : This fair which was held on each Thursday of the month of Shravan, was dedicated to Bibi Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet Muhammad and was also largely attended.

We do not have any account of the observance of some other important Muslim rituals and festivals like Id-ul-Fitar, Id-uz-Zoha, Fateah-Doaz-Daham, Fateah-Yazh-Daham, Sabemiraj, Sabebarat, Ramzan, Akherichahar Sumba, etc., which must have been also observed with great faith and fervour.

FESTIVALS OF OTHER COMMUNITIES

The Jainas had a sizeable population in Varanasi, the birthplace of two of their Tirthankars, and had temples here. Surely they had their religious festivals too, but we do not have any accounts of these either.

Most of the Christians, both Europeans and Indians, lived in the outskirts of the City and these festivals were confined to their membership. The observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were hardly the public festivals in the City as the occasion was in Calcutta in those days, or as it has become in present-day Varanasi.

A list of fairs showing also the figure of participants throughout the year of 1909—though of a much later date than our period—has been placed in the Appendix to give readers some idea of the attendance to such fairs.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

It is evident from the above study of rituals, fairs and festivals that there were about sixty-two special occasions, including eclipses, which were celebrated or observed by Hindus during about two hundred and ten

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* For details, see Chapter V.

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days a year. But as some of the festivals like the Ramlila, Ashvin Navaratra and Durga Puja synchronized with some other festivals, the actual number of days—if the days of synchronization are counted separately for each festival—would rise still higher. The spirit of the local proverb, 'seven days, nine fairs' is thus fully justified. It is also observed that in the months of Shravan, Bhadra, Ashvin, and Kartik and again in the month of Phalgun, that is, almost during and after the rainy season, as well as in the spring, the maximum and major celebrations took place. The common basis for most of the fairs and festivals of the Hindus was religion, which is evident from the association of the following gods, goddesses, demigods, incarnations of god, etc. connected with them : Shiva, Vishnu, Yama, Surya, Chandra, Durga, Ganga, Tulasi, Shitala, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Ganesha, Vamana, Rama, Krishna, Bhairava, ancestors, serpents, etc. Thus, different religious traditions which have evolved in the City or were introduced here from outside, are clearly reflected on its annual calendar of religious celebrations. This reveals a uniquely synthesizing and harmonizing character of the City in the fields of both religion and culture. Among its rituals, bathing in the Ganga was most common and universally performed on a number of occasions, especially during solar and lunar eclipses when the number of bathers would soar to 50,000 and even higher. Next in preference was bathing in the sacred tanks and fasting was also common.

We have already mentioned that some rituals, fairs and festivals were imported into the City by communities belonging to other provinces. Among them, Rajasthani, Gujarati, Maharashtrian and Bengalee festivals were prominent. Those of the Maharashtrian and Bengalee communities were presumably introduced and popularised when these groups started settling in the City in growing numbers in the eighteenth century.

One of the most noticeable and important features of the Hindu celebrations was that women were the main support of rituals, fairs and festivals. Without their enthusiastic and active participation, these Hindu fairs and festivals would have lost much of their spirit and charm. There were some celebrations, for example, the Gana-Gauri Puja, Kajri Tij, Tila Tritiya, which were almost exclusively observed and attended by the City's womenfolk.

There was, however, a different dimension to these fairs and festivals. Their growing frequency and number of participants, because of the improved transport and communications of the nineteenth century, involved problems of management and the maintenance of law and order. Controlling

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'the vast sea of human beings' on some occasions, like special bathing festivals during solar and lunar eclipses, the *Kartiki Purnima*, and Ramlila festival in Chitrakut and Nati Imli and Chauka Ghat, was a matter of serious concern to the authorities. Unwieldy crowds gave a free hand to pickpockets, snatchers, thieves and other miscreants, which is covered in more detail in Chapter XIX on Law and Order. Casualties, from petty wounds to loss of life, because of the tremendous pressure of the crowds occasionally took place. It has been already recorded that during an ablution ceremony in 1825, nearly forty people died owing to the excessive pressure of the crowds. It is not known what effective measures were taken by the authorities to stop the recurrence of such grievous accidents, though the Government did take some steps to maintain law and order during the fairs.

It was alleged by Rev. Sherring that immorality had crept into most of the fairs. According to him, some fairs were notorious for immoral practices, while others provided the opportunity for committing vices, as there were occasions for common bathing during Kartiki Purnima and Lota Bhanta fairs,and Gaunharins, low-class women of questionable character, were present at such fairs. Some female singers with unclean backgrounds also participated in the Kajri Tij and Lolark Chhat fair.[100] Being a staunch Christian missionary, Sherring's allegations are hardly justified, since his abhorrence of Hindu rituals and celebrations gave his reports and observations a dubious and biased view, tending to exaggerate the darker side of such large congregations.

The possibility of crimes owing to the common gathering of men and women at fairs was not a feature of Hindu fairs alone. In fact, the same might take place during large fairs of any community. Moreover, the attendance of Gaunharins did not necessarily mean that the event bred immorality, for they must have visited the fairs as other women did and occasionally just sang to the crowd, hence, their presence presumably carried no special significance to most of the other visitors. Even if they performed to provide entertainment, it was most likely that their dancing and singing was enjoyed as simple fun. This is also what happens today on such occasions. At the Kajri Tij, a fair meant for women only, the greatest Gaunharin presence would be seen, as they were adept at singing Kajri songs, an essential part of that fair. Quite contrary to Sherring's observations, Malachowski, the Polish traveller whose description of the Durga Puja has already been quoted, was charmed at the spontaneity of people's jubilation on such occasions when he relates, 'how these people

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who had collected in such a crowd and made merry with such zeal without seeking the aid of any stimulation with strong drink.' By this statement, perhaps Malachowski meant that such public spontaneity may not have been so natural at carnivals in Europe.

Of course, secular entertainments were a predominate feature of a few festivals like Holi, Buḍhwamangal and also the Piyala ka Mela* and one could hardly deny that excesses were committed on some of these occasions, especially during the Holi when the sense of decency was sometimes openly outraged. The use of obscene language, making fun, and the showing of erotic figures was common[101] and women were often subject to indecent comments during Holi.[102] But most women avoided treading outside their houses, especially on the last two days of Holi, and remained totally absent from the Holi fair at Dashashwamedh Ghat.

IMPACT OF FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Fairs and festivals involved the observing of rituals and spiritual practices, like bathing in the Ganga and other sacred *kundas*, visiting temples, worshipping deities, telling one's beads, meditation and prayer, reciting hymns and singing devotional songs. Universal performances of given rituals on a particular occasion, date and place give rise to most of the festivals and fairs. This natural link between rituals, fairs and festivals has been evident in the foregoing descriptions. This elaborate network of Hindu celebrations was deeply connected with religious rites and naturally invigorated Hinduism in Varanasi.

Fairs and festivals provided Hindus, who were otherwise loosely bound, with a number of occasions when they would get together freely and intimately, irrespective of caste or creed, high or low, sectarian or provincial differences for a common purpose. Thus, fairs and festivals played an important role in bringing about a sense of religious and social harmony among the sect- and cast-ridden Hindu society of the City. Again, festivals like Diwali, Vijaya Dashami, Holi and Rakshabandhan contributed to a mutual reconciling of misunderstandings and feuds and the forging of new and better relations. Celebrations like *Bhatridwitiya* would strengthen family ties.

There was also an impact of the fairs and festivals, though to a nominal extent, upon Hindu-Muslim relations. Not only Muslim traders

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* See details of these festivals in this Chapter.

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and shopkeepers, but also Muslim dancers and musicians,[103] derived benefit from these Hindu fairs and festivals. Among the Muslim participants, one famous example is that of the Governor of the City, Mir Rustam Ali, who himself used to play Holi[104] in his palace in the 1730s. This was such a well-known fact that it formed the theme of some songs[105] and at least one painting.[106] Similarly, many Hindus, generally belonging to the lower social strata, would join the Muslim fair of Ghazi Miyan.[107] It was also not unlikely that they enjoyed the Muslim fair of Fatman ke Mela. Again, many Hindus, irrespective of caste, attended the Muharram[108] processions as onlookers and at least some rejoiced during the Id-uz-Zoha along with the Muslims.

Fairs and festivals, especially due to their frequency and popularity, had positive economic significance contributing to the affluence of the City in general and maintaining a large variety of professional classes, such as shopkeepers, traders, musicians, barbers, *ekkah*-drivers, boatmen, etc., and, above all, the *pandas* and *ghatiyas*. Rich sums could be earned by pandas and ghatiyas[109] on some occasions like special bathings during the lunar or solar eclipses. In view of the greater income of shopkeepers, traders and pandas during fairs and festivals, taxes were imposed on them by the Government.[110] A fee had to be paid by all traders at the Diwali; the sellers of brass pots and copper vessels from the first class shops, etc., at the Pancha Ganga Ghat had to pay Rs.7/- and those of second class wares, Rs. 5/- each during the *Kartiki Snan*; the pandas of the principal temples had to pay 12 paise per month during *Purnimasi* festivals, which was of course nominal considering their huge incomes on such occasions.

Again, these festivals and fairs were, as it were, the kindergartens, the trade schools, and auditions for different branches of folk and classical culture. Persons engaged in these events were given a chance to perfect various skills. In producing handicrafts like the beautiful wooden and clay toys and models, metal ware, ivory decorations, delicious sweetmeats, and in nurturing the performing arts like folk songs, instrumental music, especially the shehnai, and vocal music, etc., which were the pride of the City, the role of fairs and festivals cannot be over-emphasized.

Besides these, the colourful performance of the Ramlila, the illumination during Diwali, and the magnificent boat-festival of Buḍhwamangal had such charm and magnificance that they earned the City a unique cultural position. Finally, the dancing, vocal and

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instrumental music, merry-go-rounds, kite-flying, fire-works, mock-fighting and, above all, the occasional dramatic performances and other entertaining programmes such as the Ramlila, Krishnalila, Narasingha Chaudas, Baman Dwadas and Budhwamangal must have been greatly enjoyed and appreciated by the people, especially the women, who otherwise enjoyed very little latitude for entertainment in those days.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS INVIGORATED

Before concluding, let us try to determine if the activities of the Christian missionaries and the inroads of Western culture adversely affected Hindu rituals, fairs, and festivals of the City, as some contend. Reverend Sherring held that missionary preaching and the imparting of Western education were responsible for discontinuing the 'fallacious customs' of *Batas Pariksha*, or weather-forecasting, on the day of the Guru Purnima festival[111] and, that according to his information, the number of festivals was gradually declining towards the third quarter of the nineteenth century, which is however not corroborated by the facts.

While the number of discontinued fairs was very few, even according to the information of Sherring, it was during the very same period that the new fair of Ganga Saptami[112] was introduced and existing fairs, like the Ramlila and Budhawamangal, assumed ever greater propensity for pomp and grandeur. Better transportation and communications after the introduction of the Northwestern Railway in 1860s added further impetus to fairs and festivals.

Historically speaking, the whole of the nineteenth century, save the disturbed period of the Mutiny of 1857,[113] was a golden period for Hindu rituals, fairs and festivals in Varanasi. That the fairs in large part would continue even later becomes evident from the Table of Fairs of 1909 placed in the Appendix. In fact, it was beyond the power of the Christian missionaries or the impact of Western culture to extinguish substantially such traditions as they were too deeply rooted in the psyche of the people and of the land itself. Contrary to Sherring's contention, these celebrations developed ever more freely in the backdrop of Hindu revivalism. Another important point to note is that this revitalization of Hindu fairs and festivals posed no obstacle whatsoever to the free and open celebration of fairs and festivals of other communities. And herein lay the uniqueness of Varanasi as a centre of culture, a City where two of its presiding traits are diversity and catholicity.

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APPENDIX

TABLE OF FAIRS : 1909*

Locality	Name of Fair	Dates	Estimated Attendance
Ganga	Budhwa Mangal	Chait Badi 12th to Sudi1st	30.000
Ganga	Grahan	Lunar eclipse	50.000
Ganga	Grahan	Solar eclipse	50.000
Ganga	Nirjala Ekadashi	Jeth Badi 11th	8.000
Asi Ghat	Lolark Kunda	Bhadon Bada Amawasya	6.000
Asi Ghat	Snanjatra	Jeth Purnamasi	2.000
Chaushatti Ghat	Dashehra	Jeth Badi 10th	8.000
Dashashwamedh	Dhuraddi (Holi)	Chait Badi 1st	15.000
Rajmandir Ghat	Ramlila	Kuar Sudi 9th	2.000
Rajmandir Ghat	Gangouri	Chait Sudi 3rd	2.000
Mir Ghat	Narka Chaudash	Shawan Sudi 15th, Bhadon Badi 7th & 14th	2.000
Gai Ghat	Daso Autar	Kartik Badi 9th	1.000
Gai Ghat	Ramlila	Kuar Sudi 9th	1.000
Manikarnika Ghat	Ramlila	Kuar Sudi 9th	1.000
Ram Ghat	Ramnaumi	Chait Sudi 9th	5.000
Jam Ghat	Jamdvitiya	Kartik Badi 4th	5.000
Ram Ghat	Vyas Puja	Shawan Sudi 1st	200
Ram Ghat	Ramlila	Kuar Sudi 7th to 10th	20.000
Panchaganga Ghat	Diwali	Kartik Purnamasi	8.000
Panchaganga Ghat	Nijhar Talka(Tila Tritiya)	Bhadon Badi 3rd	2.000
Panchaganga Ghat	Ganga Ashtami	Baishakh Sudi 8th	5.000
Panchaganga Ghat	Ganga Ashnan	Baishakh Purnamasi	5.000
Prahlad Ghat	Narsingh Chaudash	Baishakh Badi 14th	1.000
Barna Sangam	Barni	Chait Badi 12th	5.000
Chauka Ghat	Nagar Pradakshin	Paush Sudi 1st	2.000
Pishachmochan	Shraddh Puja	Paush Badi 14th	500
Pishachmochan	Lota Bhanta	Ashvin Sudi 14th	5.000
Pishachmochan	Ramlila	Kuar Sudi 5th	4.000
Dinanath ka gola	Do	Kuar Sudi 9th	2.000
Aurangabad	Do	Kuar Sudi 5th	4.000
Nati Imli	Do	Kuar Sudi 11th	50.000
Lat Bhairon	Do	Kuar Sudi 7th	5.000
Kal Bhairon	Bhaironji	Ashvin Badi 8th	4.000

* Taken from the *Benares Gazetteer*, Appendix : P. XXXV-XXXVI, published in 1909.

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Bagh Pandit Beni Ram	Rath Jatra	Ashadh Badi 4th to 6th	500
Durga Kund	Durga Mela	Every Tuesday in Shawan	7.000
Durga Kund	Nauratri	Kuar Sudi 5th to 8th & Chait Sudi 8th to 10th	5.000
Bada Ganesh	Narsingh Chaudash	Baishakh Badi 14th	500
Do	Ganesh Chauth	Magh Badi 4th	8.000
Do	Ganesh Chaudash	Bhadon Badi 14th	4.000
Bishweshwarnath	Sringar Puja	Phagun Sudi 11th	15.000
Bishweshwarnath	Sheoratri	Phagun Badi 14th	25.000
Baijnath	Do	Do	2.000
Briddhkal	Ashnan	Shawan Sudi 2nd & 9th	5.000
Do	Do	Bhadon Badi 6th & 9th	5.000
Nag Kuan	Nag Panchami	Bhadon Badi 5th	4.000
Shankudhara	Ashnan	Shawan Badi 9th	2.000
Shankudhara	Kajri	Bhadon Sudi 4th	4.000
Thathari Bazar	Dhan Teras	Kartik Badi 13th	6.000
Chitrakut	Bawan Dwadashi	Bhadon Sudi 12th	1.000
Chitrakut	Sardeota	Kuar Purnamasi	1.000
Lachhmi Kund	Saria	Kuar Badi 4th to Sudi 3rd	1.800
Gopal Mandir	Annkut	Kartik Sudi 3rd	5.000
Ishwar Gangi	Hal Chhath	Bhadon Badi 6th	1.000
Bakaria Kund	Ghazi Mian	1st Sunday in Jeth	10.000
Gorakhnath-ki Tila	Dangal (?)	Chait Badi 3rd	1.000

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NOTES & REFERENCES

1. This celebration corresponded with the worship of snakes mentioned in the *Bauddha Jatakas*, 1/311 & 3/230, quoted in Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, pp. 34-35.
2. *Jaina Sutra*, quoted : *Ibid.*, p. 45.
3. Sherring, *Benares*, p.214.
4. Jayanarayan Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p.198; Jadunath Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, p. 516; Sherring, op.cit., p. 214.
5. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 194-95.
6. Sherring, op.cit., p. 215.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 216-17.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
10. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 194-95; Sherring, op.cit., p. 217 .
11. Sherring, op.cit., p. 217.
12. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 233; The Bengalees of Varanasi took great interest in this festival. H. H. Wilson, *Hindu Religions* or *An Account of the Various Religious Sects of India*, p. 73.
13. Sherring, op.cit., p. 218.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 195.
17. Sherring, op.cit., p. 218.
18. Sarvadhikari, op.cit., p. 513.
19. See Prinsep's Map of Benares of 1822; Sherring, op.cit., p. 219.
20. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 218-19.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
22. See *Russom Saleena*, Home Public, March—April 1788.
23. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 220-21; Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 195-96.
24. Wilson, *Religious Sects of the Hindus*, p. 73. This festival was followed by the *Dadhikanda* festival when the Vaishnavas splashed fellow-devotees or smeared them with curd tinted with turmeric powder and danced arm in arm, singing before the image.
25. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 196; Sarvadhikari, op.cit., p. 515.
26. According to Jayanarayan, this was observed also by the Gujaratis. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 196.
27. *Ibid.*, Sarvadhikari, op.cit., p. 515; Sherring, op.cit., p. 221.
28. Sherring, op.cit., p. 221.
29. See 1796 List of Mahallas, Chapter II.
30. Sarvadhikari, op.cit., p. 515; Sherring, op.cit., p. 222.
31. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 221-22.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
33. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 196-97.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 196-200.

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35. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 222-23.
36. Sukul, op.cit., p. 246.
37. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 222-23.
38. *Ibid.*
39. These schedules have been prepared on the basis of the account left by Jayanarayan though there may be one or two overlappings. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 198-200.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Sherring, op.cit., p. 223.
42. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 198-200.
43. Sherring, op.cit., p. 223.
44. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 197-98.
45. Sarvadhikari, op.cit., p. 516.
46. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 198; Sarvadhikari, op.cit., p. 516.
47. Sherring was incorrect in recording that the Durga festival took place from the first to third day of the bright fortnight of Kartik; as it was actually held from the sixth to tenth day of the bright fortnight, op.cit., p. 223.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 203-04.
50. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 223-24.
51. Sherring, op.cit., p. 224; Sukul, op.cit., p. 248.
52. Sherring, op.cit., p. 224.
53. Edward Thornton, *A Gazetteer of the Territories under the Government of the East India Company and of the Native States on the Continent of India*, Vol. I, p. 352.
54. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 204-06.
55. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 224- 25.
56. *Ibid.*
57. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 205.
58. Sherring, op.cit., p. 225.
59. *Ibid.*, Lamps were hoisted in a basket in honour of departed souls.
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. '*Konasthane rasadhari nrityagita raje*'—Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 201.
64. Sherring, op.cit., p. 227.
65. Wilson, op.cit., p. 75.
66. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 225-26.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
68. See the item, *Tebazaree* under the Mehal of Foujedarry. Home Public, March-April, 1788, 3701-774; Sherring, op.cit., p. 226.
69. Sherring, op.cit., p. 226.
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*, p. 226-27.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

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73. *Ibid.*
74. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 206-07; Sherring, op.cit., p. 227.
75. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 206-07.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 207-11; Detailed description of *Holi* has also been furnished by Rev. William Buyers in his *Recollections of Northern India*, pp. 393-96.
77. *Ibid.*
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 207-11; Women used to wear coloured-dress even in the ages of Mahajanapadas on the occasion of festivals, *Bauddha Jatakas*, 1312-13, referred to in Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 45.
79. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 207-11.
80. Sherring, op.cit., pp. 227-28.
81. *Ibid.*
82. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 210.
83. *Ibid.*, pp. 211-12.
84. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 251; Pratap Narayan, *Charitrashtak*, referred to in Sri Swalji Nagar, *Kashi ki Kuchh Adbhut Baten : Hans*, 'Kashi Visheshank', p. 44; Mukherjee Biswanath, *Yahan Banaras Hai*, pp.61-62.
85. H. R. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, pp. 67-68.
86. James Prinsep, *Benares Illustrated*, p. 89.
87. Ghoshal, op.cit., pp. 211-15.
88. For a detailed and analytical presentation of Budhwamangal, see, *Patronage, Identity and Cultural Change : Five Melas of Banaras*, Nita Kumari, *Varanasi Through the Ages*, pp. 160-65; The following poets of Bengal composed poems on the Budhwamangal : Nabinchandra Sen, Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay, and Amritalal Basu.
89. Sherring, op.cit., p. 229.
90. Thornton, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 348.
91. Sherring, op.cit., p. 167.
92. James Prinsep, *Benares Illustrated*, p. 59.
93. *Ibid.*, COV., Basta 96, Vol. 180, Proceedings of the 47th meeting of the Committee for Local Improvement. Minutes by James Prinsep, 6 June 1826.
94. News published on 15 Sept. 1832. Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay, *Samvad Patre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. II, pp. 564-65.
95. *Ibid.*
96. Kubernath Sukul recorded useful information on the state of rituals, fairs and festivals of modern Varanasi in his monograph. Sukul, op.cit., pp. 228-63.
97. Thomas Bacon, *The Oriental Annual*, pp. 82-83.
98. Lord Valentia, *Voyages and Travels to India*, Vol. I, pp. 407-11. On certain Hindu festivals, the number of pilgrims resorting to the City was reported to have exceeded all calculations.
99. James Prinsep, *Benares Illustrated*, p. 49.
100. Sherring, op.cit., p. 214.
101. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 209; Sherring, op.cit., pp. 227-28.
102. Ghoshal, op.cit., p. 209.

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103. Gokul Chandra Khatri, *Kashi me Sangeet ki Shair*: *Hans*, 'Kashi Visheshank', p. 105.
104. *Ibid.*, *Khamsa* is a type of Urdu versification sung or recited on the occasion of Holi by both Hindus and Muslims.
105. Moti Chandra, op.cit., p. 251.
106. This painting which, according to Moti Chandra, dated C. 1735 A.D., has been preserved at the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University.
107. Sherring, op.cit., p. 216.
108. Statement given by Muhammad Harun of Madanpura, Varanasi, to the author on 28.5.72. Both Hindus and Muslims used to visit the fair at Kinaram Math in Krimi Kunda, held simultaneously with that of Lolark Chhat, on the sixth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra. Sukul, op.cit., pp. 240-41.
109. Sarvadhikari, op.cit., pp. 515-16.
110. Home Public, March-April 1788, 3701-774.
111. Sherring, op.cit., p. 218.
112. *Ibid.*, pp. 216-17.
113. Sarvadhikari, op.cit., pp. 515-16.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE GHATS

GHATS OFFER GLIMPSES OF LIFE

There are hundreds of ghats along the banks of the Ganga as it speeds from Gomukh, its source in the Himalayas, and ambles across the Upper India, finally, merging into the Bay of Bengal. Though many of these ghats, especially those of Varanasi, bear testimony to the uniqueness of ghat-architecture, they also provide glimpses of Indian life. The ghats of Varanasi, frequented by countless people through the ages, form an integral part of the City's history and topography. Here, a vast, barren sandbank to one side contrasts sharply with the majestic site of a long, crescent bank of colourful temples, buildings and the ever bustling ghats rising from the water's edge like so many amphitheatres on the opposite side.

These ghats offer an unparalleled panorama of life in the City from dawn to dusk. In the early morning hours of darkness, priests ring bells heard across the ghats, signalling the start of morning services in the temples and a new day. Gradually, hundreds of bathers of all descriptions assemble on the ghats to be purified in body and mind with a holy dip in the Ganga. Some enjoy the morning breeze and wait for sunrise, while others bathe with utmost devotion and chant mantras and hymns in praise of the Ganga and other divinities. The *ghatiyas*, under their large umbrellas, prepare to attend to the bathers. Priests arrive to perform worship services for clients. Vendors display their pots for carrying Ganga water and flowers and other articles of offering to the deities. Some women form in various clusters, singing while they worship, while others seek out secluded corners for prayer and meditation.

The eastern horizon, crimson, brightens to yellow and the dark sky, now a familiar blue. Finally, the effulgent golden disc appears and begins its steady ascent, dispelling the remaining darkness and revealing a vast landscape before it, the sandbank in the foreground and the far off greenery, still in shadows. One's attention is drawn to the deep blue waters

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of the Ganga, flowing gently, surely from south to north at this point in her long journey, and finally, to the City's magnificent riverfront with her ghats and temples ablaze in golden morning hues.

Life on the ghats manifests itself more intensely with daybreak, pulsating with bathers and others engaged in all manner of riverside activity : the loading and unloading merchandise on and off boats, the washing of clothes and utensils, the catching of fish.

In the afternoon, the tempo changes on the ghats. With almost no bathers to be attended, the ghatiyas sit and gossip idly, some prepare *bhang* for drinking or hemp for smoking, while the *kathaks* explain scriptures to the lingering devotees. With the setting of the sun, the dark silhouttes of the riverside temples and mansions become longer, reflecting in ripplets onto the Ganga. Temple bells of evening services resound continuously. Small lamps are set along the river and *Akashdeeps* burn timidly from atop clusters of straining bamboo posts, while rows of funeral pyres flame, smoke and smolder on the cremation ghats. Hundreds of souls witnessing the solemn evening riverfront from her banks or from hired boats are transported into another world.

On special occasions like a solar or lunar eclipse or the immersion of deities like goddess Durga, the ghats are transformed into an ocean of humankind, offering vistas that have no comparison anywhere.

Such are the ghats of Varanasi today as they have been since the remote past, and we may presume that they were every bit as compelling during the nineteenth century, as corroborated in James Prinsep's *Benares Illustrated* when he writes :

> 'The depth of the water in front of the town, in the dry season, is more than 50 feet, and the freshes of September add 42 feet to this level. The breadth of the Ganges is 600 yards at low water, and a little more than half a mile in the rains. This splendid stream forms a bay, indenting the front of the town, so as to display its picturesque beauties to great advantage. Indeed there are few objects more lively and exhilarating than the scene from the edge of the opposite sands, on a fine afternoon, under the clear sky of January. The music and bells of a hundred temples strike the ear with magic melody from the distance, amidst the buzz of human voices; and every now and then the flapping of the pigeons' wings is heard as they rise from their crates on the house tops, or whirl in close phalanx round the minarets, or alight with prisoners from a neighbour's flock. At the same time the eye rests on the vivid colours of the different groups of male and female bathers, with their sparkling brass water-vessels, or follows the bulls as they wander in the crowds in proud exercise of the rights of citizenship, munching the chaplets of flowers liberally presented to them.
>
> Then as night steals on, the scene changes, and the twinkling of lamps along the

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water's hedge, and the funeral fires, and white curling smoke, and the stone buildings lit up by the moon, present features of variety and blended images of animation, which it is out of the artist's power to embody. He may give in detail the field upon which these scenes of life are enacted, but the spectator's imagination must supply the rest. Let it be borne in mind, that upon the ghats are passed the busiest and happiest hours of every Hindoo's day : Bathing, dressing, praying, preaching, lounging, gossiping, or sleeping, there will he be found. Escaping from the dirty, unwholesome and confined streets, it is a luxury for him to sit upon the open steps and taste the fresh air of the river; so that on the ghats are concentrated the pastimes of the idler, the duties of the devout, and much of the necessary intercourse of business. In no city of the world is the population invited to a single street or place of recreation by so many attractions, and the inhabitants of Benares are justly proud of the beauty and spaciousness of the accommodation provided for them at the river's side.'

Over the centuries these ghats have become an integral part of the local society, economy, religion and culture of Varanasi. As such, they have assumed a special character and identity, both individually and collectively, and are inseparable from the life and traditions of the City.

A STUDY OF THE GHATS

The history of the ghats, which have been here over a long period, suggests that they were named after deities in most cases. This tradition was maintained till almost the end of the seventeenth century. Again, none of the traditional names of the ghats were changed throughout Muslim rule, except in one case when Mir Rustam Ali, the Governor of Varanasi, replaced the name of Jarasandha Ghat with his own towards the middle of the eighteenth century.

Girvanapadamanjari, written in Sanskrit by Varadaraja (1600-1660) is the first available work to furnish a list of ghats. There were as many as twenty-two ghats in the City in the first half of the seventeenth century. Except for a few, these bore the names of deities such as Trilochana, Brahma, Durga, Agnishwara, etc. There is no ghat mentioned by Varadaraja named after any builder or renovator.

The Mahalla Lists of 1796 & 1809 furnished in Chapter II record the names of the ghats existing around 1800.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Jayanarayan Ghoshal, in *Kashi Parikrama*, a Bengali account of Varanasi, recorded the first exhaustive list of seventy ghats from Asi to Varuna Sangam, whose steps numbered from sixty to eighty. It must be assumed that he simply missed a few ghats, such as Shivala, Panchaganga and Gai, which are known to

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have existed then. Again, a few others mentioned by him cannot be identified now. During his time, sixty ghats were made of stone and among the remaining ten, eight ghats, namely, Shmashan (presently Harishchandra), Rajballav Mashan and Yameshwar, were burning ghats; and Asi, Gular, Raj, Ducanganj and Sabitabad (or Saretabad?) were *cuchha* ghats; and the two remaining ghats, Telianala and Shahajada were uneven and built of bricks.

Prinsep, in his 1822 map of the City, furnishes a list of fifty-eight ghats from Asi to Raj Ghat, but some names on Jayanarayan's list have not been found in Prinsep's later list, some of which perhaps became obsolete and were replaced with new names. Prinsep, too, might have missed certain important ghats, such as Bhadaini, Shmashan, Kshemeshwar, Narad, Rana, etc.

From the map of the City prepared by Bax, the Collector of Varanasi in 1868, we get a list of fifty-five ghats. Another map prepared by Survey of India of 1920 shows a good number of ghats. We also get a list of ghats prepared by the Kashi Tirth Sudhar Trust, a body set up in 1926 for their investigation and renovation. Govinda Chandra Bandyopadhyay, a qualified engineer, prepared a map called *Kashi Chitra** around 1938 which also showed their locations. There is yet another list prepared around 1970 by Rambachan Singh, a modern researcher. With the help of these lists, a comparative table of ghats during different periods in the history of the City has been prepared and placed in the Appendix. The ghats noted in this table are now presented individually.

THE GHATS BRIEFLY PRESENTED

Asi Ghat : Situated at the southernmost part of the City, it was named after the Asi rivulet[1] which joined the Ganga at this spot. The water near the ghat, was considered one of the holy *Panchatirthas* and the site was visited by a large number of pilgrims. It was once owned by the Maharaja of Varanasi.[2]

Kacha Ghat : This was mentioned only by Prinsep.[3] The modern Lala Misra Ghat is perhaps situated at this spot, which was once owned by the Maharaja of Rewa.

Tulsidas Ghat : Prinsep mentions the Tulsidas Math, a monastery

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* This was incorporated in the third edition of *Kashi Khandam*, with Bengali translation, published by the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama of Varanasi in 1938.

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named after and associated with the memory of Tulsidas, the great poet and saint of mediaeval India.[4] The Tulsidas Ghat was built later on and was once owned by Banke Ram, son of Mahant Swami Nath.[5]

Lolark Ghat : Referred to only in *Girvanapadamanjari*, it was named after Lolarka Kunda and the idol of Lolarkeshwara Shiva located in the vicinity. This name of the ghat became obsolete later.

Bhadaini Ghat : Named after the large and populous *mahalla* of Bhadaini, which was situated near it.[6] Later on a water pumping station was set up over this ghat.

Pareshnath Ghat : This ghat, which was mentioned only by Jayanarayan was named after the Jaina Tirthankar, Parshvanath, who was born in Bhelupura Mahalla. There were Jaina temples near this ghat,[7] but the name became obsolete later on. The modern Janaki Ghat (or Nepali Ghat), which was perhaps situated at the same site or to one side, was constructed by the Rani of Sursan and was once owned by Thakur Ashrafi Singh.[8]

Akrur Ghat : Named after the deity Akrureshwara Shiva,[9] installed in Bhadaini. It was once owned by Raja Shivaprasad.[10]

Ganesh Ghat, Narghambar Ghat, Ray Girdhar Lal Ghat : Bax, in his map of 1868, showed these three ghats to be situated in between Tulsi Ghat and Buchraj Ghat. Narghambar Ghat is most probably the misspelling of Digambar Ghat which was named after the Digambar *Akhaḍa* of the Jainas, situated nearby.[11]

Buchraj Ghat : This was named after a leading *mahajan* of the City named Lala Bachhraj,[12] who built this ghat perhaps in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It was also owned by one Shekhar Chand of the Shwetambar Jaina sect.[13] At present there is another ghat called Mata Anandamayee Ghat which had formerly been Baladev Sahay Ghat near the Buchraj Ghat.[14]

Sajada Ghat : This was named after Mughal Prince Jehandar Shah II* (Jawan Bakt), the eldest son of Shah Alam, the Emperor of Delhi,[15] who came to the City in 1784 and lived in the vicinity with other members of his family till his passing away in 1788. Lord Valentia met members of his family at Shivala Fort, where they were residing in 1803.[16] This ghat was mentioned only by Jayanarayan, and later on the name became obsolete.

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* For details regarding Jehandar Shah, see Chapter XVIII.

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Prabhudas Ghat, which was once owned by one Babu Nirmal Kumar, is perhaps situated at this site or at its side.[17]

Vaidyanath Ghat : Named after the deity Vaidyanatha Shiva, it is mentioned only by Jayanarayan.

Niranjani Ghat : Wrongly called Nirjali by Jayanarayan, it was named after the Niranjani Akhaḍa of the *Dashanami* sect of monks who also owned it.[18]

Nirvani Ghat : This ghat was named after the Nirvani Akhaḍa, also of the Dashanami sect, who also owned it.[19]

Hingu Ghat : This ghat, mentioned only by Jayanarayan, was named after Hingua Mahalla,[20] situated nearby. Hingua is derived from Hayagriva Tirtha and was popularly known as Hingua Talao. While Jayanarayan Ghoshal mentioned the previous four ghats, namely, the Vaidyanath, Niranjani, Nirvani and Hingu, separately, Prinsep only referred to Shivala Ghat situated at the same site. Later on, as many as five ghats were situated at this place;[21] (1) Panchakot Ghat (owned by the *zamindar* of Panchakot of Bengal), (2) Niranjani Ghat (owned by the Niranjani Akhaḍa), (3) Nirvani Ghat (owned by the Nirvani Akhaḍa), (4) Chet Singh Ghat or Khiḍki Ghat[22] (owned by the Maharaja of Varanasi), and (5) Shivala Ghat (also owned by the Maharaja of Varanasi). Khiḍki Ghat was constructed by one Baijnath Mishra, an employee of Raja Balwant Singh of Varanasi.[23]

Shivala Ghat : This is named after the Shiva Temple situated in the famous Shivala fort of the Maharaja of Varanasi. It had suffered damage owing to the rainy season of 1795 when about an eighty-cubic-foot length of the old stone ghat was entirely carried away by the Ganga. Consequently, several of the small buildings attached to the residence of the Mughal Princess Qutlaq Sultan Begum, who was residing in the vicinity, were severely damaged. Having received this information, Jonathan Duncan, the Resident, himself examined the site and reported that unless it was duly repaired before the next rains, the whole place might be destroyed and that the adjoining parts of the City might be also damaged terribly.[24] Accordingly, the area was duly repaired,[25] but a wall of the place was again carried away by the Ganga in 1798,[26] after which Major Humfreys, the Engineer officer at Chunar, took up the repair work and completed the revetment in early 1799.[27]

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Swapneshwar Ghat[28] : This ghat existed during the rule of the Gahadavala king and was named after the deity of Swapneshwara Shiva,[29] which must have been installed in a temple in the vicinity of the present Shivala Ghat.

Dandi Ghat : Named after the *Dandi* ascetics, this was perhaps the same ghat that was reconstructed at a later date by Lalluji Agarwal who owned it.[30] Another ghat, called Gulri,[31] emerged near Dandi Ghat and was owned by the same Lalluji Agarwal.

Rameshwar Ghat : Called after the deity of Rameshwara Shiva, which must have been installed in this locality, it is mentioned only by Varadaraja in the *Girvanapadamanjari*. The name became obsolete later on.[32]

Hanuman Ghat : Named after Hanumana and the temple situated in the vicinity, this ghat was owned by Mahant Harihar Bharati of the temple.[33]

Awadh Ghat : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, this must have been named after the big mahalla of Oudh, situated around it. This name went out of use later on. The present Mysore Karnataka Ghat is perhaps now at the same site.[34]

Maśhan or **Shmashan Ghat** or **Harishchandra Ghat** : A fairly old ghat, it is evident from the very name that it was a burning ghat. On the presumption that it had some association with the mythological king Harishchandra, it was called Harishchandra Ghat in comparatively recent times.

Lali Ghat : A reference to Haveli Lalloo in this locality was made in the record of 1796.[35] Most probably, one Lallo or Lalli Das or Lali Baba, a holy man from Bihar was connected with both this ghat and the mahalla and was owned by the Maharaja of Varanasi. The modern **Vijayanagaram Ghat**,[36] constructed and owned by the Maharaja of Vijayanagaram, is situated by the side of this ghat.

Kedar Ghat : This ghat, also fairly old, was named after Kedaranatha or Kedareshwara Shiva. The well-known Kedaranatha Temple is situated just above the ghat,[37] which was owned by the Kumarswami Math.[38]

Haḍa Ghat : This was named after the Haḍas. The mahalla of Haḍar Bag, named after the king of Kota Bundi,[39] chief of the Haḍa[40] clan of the Rajputs, existed in the vicinity. This ghat is mentioned only by Jayanarayan and the name became obsolete later on.

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Kowarswami (Kumarswami) **Ghat** : Named after either Kumarswami, the founder of the Kumarswami Math, or the Math itself. This ghat, again, only mentioned by Jayanarayan,was later on known as Chauki Ghat after a Government outpost for collecting the octroi tax. One part of the Chauki ghat was owned by the Kumarswami Math and the other by the local municipality.[41]

Nala Ghat : First mentioned by James Prinsep, it might have been named after a drain flowing by it which joined the Ganga near this ghat. It became known as Narwa Ghat later.

Kshemeshwar Ghat : Named after the deity, Kshemeshwara Shiva,[42] installed within the precincts of the Kumarswami Math, it was owned by the same Math.

Sadananda Ghat : Built by and named after Lala Sadananda who was the Dewan of Raja Chet Singh.[43] This name, mentioned only by Jayanarayan, became obsolete and the site was perhaps encroached upon by a neighbouring ghat or ghats.

Mansarovar Ghat : Named after Manas Sarovar Tirtha,[44] a replica of which existed in the vicinity.

Narad Ghat : Named after the deity, Naradeshwara Shiva,[45] installed in a temple near the ghat, it was owned by the Dattatreya Math.[46]

Kuwaree Ghat : Identical with the modern Khori Ghat, it was owned by Kavindra Narayan Singh and Mathura Pandey.[47]

Amrit Rao Ghat or **Raja Ghat** : Built by and named after the Peshwa Amrita Rao,[48] who lived in this part of the City, it had also been called Chhattar Ghat owing to a large umbrella at the top of the mansion over the ghat.[49] The *Benares Gazetteer* of 1909, however, held that the ghat was called so because there was a *satra*, or almshouse, over it.[50]

Manhar Ghat : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, the name became obsolete later on. The actual name might have been Malhar Ghat, or ghat of the boat-men. Perhaps it is at this site that the present Muneshwar Ghat[51] or Bhubaneshwar Ghat[52] is situated.

Sarveshwar Ghat : This was named after the deity of Sarveshwara Shiva, which had been installed in the temple nearby.[53] This same ghat was called Gangamahal Ghat by James Prinsep. It was owned by Mathura Pandey.[54]

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Pandey Ghat : Situated beside Sarveshwar Ghat, Jayanarayan placed it after Narad Ghat. Later on, one portion of it was purchased by Babua Pandey and, accordingly, was named Babua Pandey Ghat.[55] The Kashi Tirth Sudhar Trust held that Mathura Pandey was the owner of this ghat.[56] Dhobi Ghat, used by the washermen and owned by the Kumarswami Math, and Dighpatia Ghat, named after and owned by the *zamindar* of Dighapatia in Bengal, came into being later on. They were beside Pandey Ghat.[57]

Chaushatti Yogini Ghat (Popularly called Chaushatti Ghat) : Named for the deities of Chaushatti Yogini Temple situated nearby,[58] it was owned by the Maharaja of Udaipur.[59]

Rana Ghat : This was named after and built by Rana Jagat Singh of Udaipur of Rajasthan in the seventeenth century. He also built the Rana Mahal, a mansion situated nearby, to accommodate pilgrims from his state. His successors were the owners of this ghat.[60]

Saptarshi Ghat : Named after the deity of Sapta Rishishwara Shiva,[61] it was mentioned only by Jayanarayan and later on this name became obsolete. Perhaps Munshi Ghat was built at this site or near it.

Munshi Ghat : Built by Sridhar Munshi, a minister of the Raja of Nagpur in the first quarter of the nineteenth century,[62] it was named after and owned by the Raja. One portion of it was purchased by the Raja of Dwarbhanga and has been, appropriately, called the Dwarbhanga Ghat.[63]

Kewalgiri Ghat : This was named after Kewalgiri, who was possibly an ascetic of the Dashanami sect. A mahalla called Kucha Kewalgiri,[64] situated nearby, was named after one Kewalgiri who was possibly the same man.

Ahalya Ghat : Constructed by and named after Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore, it was owned by the Raja of Nagpore.[65] The same ghat was sometimes called Shitla Ghat after the deity of Shitala which was installed in the shrine over it. Later on, the northern part of the Ahalya Bai Ghat was made separate and called Shitala Ghat; it was owned by the Municipality.[66]

Dashashwamedh Ghat : The waters about this are considered one of the holy *Panchatirthas*.[67] The ghat is named so because, according to the Purana, it was once the site of the 'ten-horse sacrifice' performed by Lord Brahma with the help of Raja Divodas of Kashi.[68] Another view holds that

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the name is derived after the site where the Bharasiva kings performed horse sacrifices in the second century A.D. after defeating the Kushanas.[69] It has been reported that very near the Dashashwamedh Ghat and the Rudrasarovara, where the Dashashwamedha sacrifice had been performed, a *yajna* was performed in the nineteenth century.[70]

It is important to note that by virtue of its location near the Vishwanatha and Annapurna temples, its holy associations, spaciousness and easy access to the Ganga, this ghat was the most frequented of the City. It was renovated around 1735 by Baji Rao Peshwa and was owned by the Municipality.[71]

Ramananda Ghat : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, it was named after Ramananda, the celebrated *Ramayet* saint of Mediaeval India, who lived in the City. His followers set up a temple nearby.[72] Later on, the name of this ghat went out of use and its site was encroached upon by a neighbouring ghat or ghats.

Prayag Ghat : Named after the Prayag Tirtha, a famous place of pilgrimage, it was renovated and owned by a lady *zamindar* of Putia in Bengal.[73] The Prayageshwara Shiva Temple is situated over it.[74]

Ghoḍa Ghat : Named *ghoḍa*, meaning horse, it was owned by the Municipality.[75] The northern portion of this ghat is now called Rajendra Prasad Ghat, after the first President of independent India.[76]

Manmandir Ghat (or Manmandil Ghat) : Jayanarayan referred to this ghat as Man Sing Ghat. Both the ghat and the palace above it were constructed by Raja Man Singh of Amber of Rajasthan in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, possibly in 1699.[77] It was owned by the Maharaja of Jaypur. Later on, Raja Jay Singh II of Jaipur constructed astronomical observatories above this ghat and at Jaipur, Mathura, Delhi and Ujjain in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.[78]

Someshwar Ghat : Existing in the seventeenth century and mentioned by Varadaraja, it was named after the Someshwara Shiva deity,[79] which must have been installed nearby. This was situated near, or, at the site of the present Manmandir Ghat.[80]

Tripur Bhairavi Ghat : Named after the female deity Tripura Bhairavi whose temple was nearby,[81] this ghat was divided into three parts, the first and third owned by the Maharaja of Varanasi, while the second part was owned by one Pandit Mayananda.[82]

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Mir Ghat : Built by and named after Mir Rustam Ali, the Governor of the City in 1735,[83] it was owned by the local Maharaja.[84]

Most probably, Vriddhaditya Ghat, named after the Vriddhaditya[85] deity; Jarasandha Ghat, named after the Jarasandheshwara Shiva deity; and the Jarasandheshwara Tirtha[86] were all located to either side and at Mir Ghat, respectively.

At present there are two new ghats between Mir Ghat to the south and Lalita Ghat to the north. These are Phuta Ghat, once owned by one Swami Maheshwarananda[87] and Nepali Ghat, once owned by one Nanhey Babu.[88]

Lalita Ghat : Named after the female deity, Lalita[89] and/or the Lalita Tirtha,[90] located nearby, it was owned by the Raja of Nepal.

Rajrajeshwari Ghat : Named after the female deity, Rajarajeshwari, installed nearby,[91] it was mentioned by both Jayanarayan and Prinsep. This name became obsolete later on and it was encroached upon by a neighbouring ghat or ghats.

Umraogir Ghat : Prinsep referred to this as Pusta,[92] an embankment named after a monk, while the Guide Map of 1918-19[93] and others refer to it as a *baoli*, a large well with a descending flights of stairs. It was once owned by Babu Keshab Das[94] and Babu Gopal Das.

Vishweshwar Ghat : Named after Vishweshwara Shiva, the principal deity of the City, and mentioned only by Jayanarayan, this name later became obsolete and the ghat was encroached upon by a neighbouring ghat or ghats.

Jalashayee Ghat (or, Chita Ghat) : *Jalashayee* is actually an epithet of Vishnu,[95] but this ghat was named after *maḍhis*, meaning huts[96] which were set up close to the Ganga. Dying persons were usually kept in such huts so that they might have an unobstructed view of the Gànga at the time of death and die in her presence, which was considered very holy and meritorious.[97] This is why the Town Guide Map of 1918-19 called the ghat 'Pari (though actually, Mari) Jalsai Ghat'.[98] It was owned by the Municipality.

Rajballabh Mashan Ghat : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, it was constructed around the last quarter of the eighteenth century by Raja Rajballabh, a *zamindar* of Bengal.[99] He also built a temple over the ghat,[100] but the name went out of use later on. The present Khiḍki Ghat, owned by the Nagar Mahapalika, is perhaps situated at or beside this ghat.[101]

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Manikarnika Ghat : Like Dashashwamedh Ghat, this site is also regarded as one of the *Panchatirthas*[102] and frequented by large number of pilgrims. According to the Puranas, Lord Vishnu brought the famous *tirtha* to this site with the help of his weapon, *Sudarshana Chakra*, and called it *Chakra-Pushkarini*. He was then immersed in deep meditation until Shiva was pleased and appeared before him. During their conversation, an earring (*manikarnika*) fell from Shiva's ear into the adjoining 'Chakra Pushkarini'. Henceforth, the said *Pushkarini* was called Manikarnika and it was agreed between these two divinities that this site must be a *Mukti Kshetra*, a place of liberation.

Just above the Manikarnika Ghat, there is the *charana paduka*, a marble slab bearing the footprint of Vishnu, and this holy place has been reserved for the cremation of very important persons. Said to have been the first stone-built ghat in the City, it was constructed by two anonymous Raja brothers in 1302.[103] Peshwa Baji Rao reconstructed a portion of the ghat in 1730,[104] and Rani Ahalya Bai renovated the entire ghat in 1791.[105] This ghat was then divided into two parts, one for the purpose of cremation and the other for bathing. The Rani also built another ghat to one side of Manikarnika Ghat for the convenience of female bathers, which was called Zenana Ghat.[106] Both divisions of Manikarnika Ghat were owned by the Maharaja Holkar of Indore.[107]

Baji Rao Ghat : The northern portion of the Manikarnika Ghat was constructed by Baji Rao Peshwa and accordingly called the Baji Rao Ghat.[108] It was also owned by the Maharaja of Indore.[109]

Siddhi Vinayak Ghat : Mentioned first by Varadaraja and later on by Prinsep, it was named after the deity, Siddhi Vinayaka, whose temple was located nearby.[110] The name later went out of use and the site was most probably lost to the expansion of Manikarnika Ghat.[111]

Vireshwar Ghat : Named after the deity of the Vireshwara Shiva Temple located nearby, the Maharaja of Gwalior wanted to reconstruct this ghat but was obstructed by the *Gangaputras*[112] for reasons unknown. The name became obsolete later on and was most probably lost to the neighbouring Sindhia Ghat.

Sindhia Ghat : The construction of this ghat by Baija Bai, the widow of Maharaja Sindhia of Gwalior, was started in 1830,[113] took a long time to complete[114] and was named after the Maharaja.[115] Becoming dilapidated,[116]

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it had to be renovated in the twentieth century.[117] It was owned by the Gwalior Maharaja.[118]

Some people refer to a portion of Sindhia Ghat as Dattatreya Ghat[119] because Dattatreya Temple is located here.[120]

Sankata Ghat : Named after the female deity, Sankata, installed nearby,[121] this was constructed in the first quarter of the nineteenth century by the nephew of the Panditain, the wife of Bishwambhar Pandit, agent of the Raja of Nagpore in Varanasi.[122] Later on, it was divided into two parts, viz, Sankata Ghat, owned by the Maharaja of Gwalior, and Sankata Ghat Ganga Mahal, owned by the Maharaja of Baroda.[123]

Yamesh or **Yameshwar Ghat** : Named after Yameshwara Shiva, the Lord of Death, this was a burning ghat.[124] The deities, Harishchandreshwara[125] and Harishchandra Vinayaka were installed near here, but the site was nearly lost to the encroachment of Sankata Ghat.

Bedeshwar Ghat : Mentioned in the Government records of 1796,[126] it was named after the deity of the Bedeshwara Shiva Temple, which must have been installed nearby, but could not be traced. There was a mahalla called Path Bedeshwar[127] near this ghat, which most probably derived its name from the same deity. The name of this ghat went out of use later on. Most likely situated between Yameshwar Ghat and Bhonsla Ghat, it was overtaken by them.

Bhonsla or **Kasaulis Ghat** :[128] Built by and named after the Bhonsla of Nagpur in the first quarter of the nineteenth century[129] it was one of the best built ghats in the City and was owned by the Raja of Nagpur.[130]

Goolar Ghat :[131] Mentioned by both Jayanarayan, and later, Prinsep, it was lost to its neighbouring ghat or ghats. The source of the name is not known.

Agnishwar Ghat (also called Yajneshwar[132] in the Maratha record) : Named after the deity, Agnishwara Shiva, it was extensively repaired by Peshwa Amrita Rao around the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It was owned by the Peshwa family.[133]

Nageshwar Ghat : Mentioned only by Varadaraja, it must have been named after the deity in the Nageshwara Shiva Temple, which must have been installed nearby.[134] It was situated to the south of the Agnishwar Ghat. Later on, the ghat lost its separate identity and became obsolete.

Naya Ghat (Pukka) or **Ganesh Ghat** : Named after the deity in the

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nearby Ganesha Temple, it was built and owned by Maharaja Madho Rao Peshwa. The Naya Ghat Pukka and the Naya Ghat Kham, which were built and owned by the Municipality, were most probably situated between Bhonsla Ghat and Agnishwar Ghat.

Ram Ghat : Named after Vir Rameshwara Shiva whose temple was located nearby,[135] it was later owned by the Municipality.[136]

The southern portion of this ghat has been named Mehata Ghat after the surname of a wealthy man of Calcutta, who founded the *Ballabh Ram Shaligram Aushadhalaya* in this locality later on.[137]

Chor Ghat : This ghat perhaps derived its name from the female deity of the Charchika Devi Temple located nearby.[138] According to one tradition, this ghat had some association with a noted thief who would come by this staircase when he wanted to bathe in the Ganga unobserved.[139] It was owned by the Maharaja of Gwalior.

Mangala Gauri Ghat : Named after the female deity, Mangala Gauri, whose temple was located nearby, construction of this ghat was started by Daulat Rao Sindhia in 1828-29. One portion of the Mangalagauri Ghat was called Daulat Ghat, but was popularly known as Dalpat Ghat.[140] The Mangala Gauri Ghat was owned by the Maharaja of Gwalior.[141]

Balaji Ghat : Having purchased the site with a temple, the ghat was constructed by Peshwa Baji Rao II, in the first half of the nineteeth century,[142] and it was owned by the Peshwa family.[143]

Nrisingha Daḍa Ghat : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, it most probably derived its name from the deity of Kharba Nrisingha which was possibly installed somewhere nearby.[144] This name became obsolete and was either encroached upon by the Panchaganga Ghat or became the Lakshmanbala Ghat, as the Lakshmanbala Mansion with a temple was there.

Panchaganga or **Panchanad Ghat** : Named after the five sacred rivers;[145] the Ganga, Yamuna, Dhutapapa, Kirana and Saraswati, the water here was one of the holy Panchatirthas,[146] and consequently, was visited by a large number of devotees. A Maharashtrian, Sripat Rao by name, reconstructed this ghat around 1730.[147] It was owned by the Municipality.[148] Later on, its southern portion became known as Konia Ghat.[149]

Madhoray or **Bindumadhav Ghat** : Fairly old, it was named after the

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deity, Bindumadhava or Madhoray, located in a huge temple over it. This temple was demolished and replaced by a mosque[150] by order of Aurangzeb in the later half of the seventeenth century. Raja Pant Pitri Nidhi of Puna owned it.[151]

Durga Ghat : Also old, it was named after the female deity, Brahmacharini Durga, whose temple was located nearby.[152] Reconstructed by Narayan Dikshit Kaygaonkar about 1740,[153] it was owned by the Dewan of the Maharaja of Gwalior.[154]

Brahma Ghat : Again, fairly old, it was named after Brahmeshwara Shiva, whose temple was located nearby.[155] The ghat was reconstructed by Peshwa Baji Rao's preceptor around 1740[156] and was again reconstructed by the Peshwa Baji Rao in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.[157] It was owned by the Municipality.

Rajmandir Ghat (Poosta) : This was named after the palace of the King of Bundi that was situated over it. This ghat was constructed by Raja Surjan Sing of Bundi in 1611. A long, raised embankment ran along the front of the Rajmandil Mansion, so Prinsep referred to the ghat as Rajmandir Poosta.[158] Later, one Bhavani Ghat was reported to have existed near this embankment.*

Shitala Ghat : Named after the deity Shitala, installed nearby,[159] it was constructed and owned by the Maharaja of Kotah Bundi.[160] The Maharaja also had a palace above the ghat that became dilapidated later.[161]

Lal Ghat : This was named after Lal Shah,[162] a man of consequence under Raja Balwant Singh of Kashi. The ghat was referred to by Jayanarayan as Lal Shah Gaḍ, which means the Castle of Lal Shah.[163] Later on, this ghat was called Birla Ghat.[164] Its *pukka* portion was owned by Raja Pitam Singh, while the *kuccha* portion was owned by the Municipality.[165]

Chorgalia Ghat : Mentioned only by Prinsep, the name became obsolete.

Gai Ghat : Named after the deity in the nearby Goprekshesheshwara[166] Temple, E. B. Havell witnessed a 'colossal statue of the sacred cow, carved with much monumental dignity' on the ghat step in the first decade of the twentieth century.[167] It was owned by the Municipality.[168]

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* For an old illustration (a painting on cloth) of the Rajmandir Ghat or Bundipur Kota Ghat see Dr. Harishankar—*Kashi ke Ghat*, Varanasi, 1996.

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Girvanapadamanjari written between 1625-1650[169] placed this ghat to the north of the Trilochan Ghat, which must have changed sites later on, or Varadaraja, the author, erred.

Bala Bai Ghat : Constructed around the first quarter of the nineteenth century[170] it was named after Bala Bai, a Maharashtrian lady. The Municipality owned it.[171]

Mahutha (Matha) **Ghat** : Named after a nearby mahalla of[172] the same name, it was owned by the Municipality.[173]

Trilochan Ghat : Fairly old, this ghat was named after the deity of the nearby Trilochana Shiva Temple.[174] Also called Pilpilla Ghat,[175] because in front of it was the Pilpilla Tirtha[176] in the Ganga. Constructed by Narayan Dikshit, the preceptor of Baji Rao Peshwa in about 1740,[177] it was reconstructed by one Nathubala of Puna around 1840.[178] It was owned by the Municipality.[179]

Gola Ghat : Perhaps identical with the Naya Ghat mentioned in the Mahalla List of 1796, it was most likely named after the Trilochan Ganj marketplace which was situated in the vicinity. It was owned by the Municipality.[180]

Matsyodari Ghat : Named after the holy Matsyodari Kunda[181] situated nearby, it was mentioned only by Jayanarayan. There might have been some water line connecting Matsyodari Kunda with the Ganga at this spot. This name became obsolete later and was perhaps replaced by the Shuka Ghat.

Shuka Ghat : Referred to by James Prinsep and also in the Town Guide Map of 1918,[182] it was perhaps situated at the same spot as the Matsyodari Ghat. Bax lists it as Babu Suka Ghat in 1868, which suggests that it was renamed after someone of that day. This name continued at least till 1920, but also went out of use and was replaced by the name Narada.[183] It was owned by the Municipality.

Pukka Ghat : It was situated beside the aforementioned Narada Ghat.[184]

Telianala Ghat : Named after the Telianala,[185] a long drain which joined the Ganga at this spot, it was owned by the Municipality.[186]

Phuteshwar Ghat : Mentioned only by Prinsep, it was popularly called Phuta Ghat.[187] But this name became obsolete later on when Naya Ghat, built by one Narasingha Dayal of the Shahabad district[188] replaced it.

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Prahlad Ghat : Named after the deity Prahladeshwara[189] Shiva, which must have been located nearby, the Municipality owned it.[190]

Raj Ghat : Old and famous, it was named for its royal association, as it was here that the Gahadavala kings of the twelfth century constructed their fort. The ghat was important for the purposes of bathing for religious merit as well as being a business ghat. This was because prior to the construction of a railway bridge over it, this ghat was one of the main landings for both incoming and outgoing passengers and goods into the City and out to eastern parts of the country.

Duncanganj Ghat : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, it was named after a market-place established during the time of Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident of the City.

Sabitabad (Saretabad) **Ghat** : Mentioned only by Jayanarayan, it was named after the mahalla situated in the vicinity.[191] This name became obsolete later on.

Varunasangam Ghat (Adi Keshav Ghat) : This was named after the confluence of the Varuna and the Ganga rivers at this site. Being one of the sacred Panchatirthas,[192] this confluence was visited by many pilgrims. It was also called Adi Keshav, after the temple situated above it,[193] and was later renovated by the Chitnis family.[194]

THE EVOLUTION OF GHATS

A general study of the table of ghats placed in the Appendix and the information given above reveals that there are 14 ghats at present that are more than 350 years old. These are the Kedar, Manas Sarovar, Chaushatti Yogini, Dashashwamedh, Agnishwar, Mangala Gauri, Bindumadhav, Durga, Brahma, Trilochan, Ram and Adi Keshava. Besides these, there are as many as 51 ghats which are more than 150 years old. It is true that there must have been repairs or renovations or almost total reconstruction of at least some of the ghats in these two categories, but the names of these ghats were not changed by the renovators.

If we closely study the earliest list of ghats available to that of 1868, many important factors come to light. The ghats were named (a) after deities; e.g., Vishweshwara, Vireshwara, Vaidyanatha, Kedara, Adi Keshava, Bindumadhava, Rama, Trilochana, Agnishwara, Brahma, Durga, Mangala Gauri, Tripur Bhairavi, Chaushatti Yogini, Shitala, Lalita, (b) after tirthas; e.g., Manasa Sarovara, Prayag, (c) after mythological

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characters; e.g., Narada, Prahlada, (d) after the confluence of rivers or canals; e.g., Asi, Matsyodari, Nala, Varunasangam, (e) after burning ghats; e.g., Mashan and Manikarnika, (f) after mahallas; e.g., Hingua, Oudh, Muhta, Saretabad, (g) after marketplaces; e.g., Gola, Duncanganj, (h) after maths and monasteries; e.g., Niranjani, Nirvani, Kumarswami, (i) after monks and saints; e.g., Pareshnath, Tulsidas, Ramananda, Kewalgiri, Umragir, (j) after chiefs; e.g., Rana, Haḍa, Ahalya Bai, Amrit Rao, Sindhia, Bhonsla, Peshwa, (k) after agents of chiefs and rich persons; e.g., Munshi, Rajballabh, Sadananda, Buchraj, (l) after Muslim chiefs; e.g., Sajada, Mir, and also after miscellaneous other persons.

Among the ghats named after deities, the deity of Shiva was the most common. This trend, which continued from the earlier period till the middle of seventeenth century, has also been corroborated by the list of ghats mentioned in the *Girvanapadamanjari* (1600-1650). But, gradually, secular names of ghats were appearing, and around 1800 there were a number of ghats that bore secular names such as the builders or renovators like Sadananda, Rana, Mir, etc. A comparative study of Jayanarayan's and Prinsep's ghat lists further reveals that the names of the ghats underwent a rapid change around the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when as many as eighteen ghat names slowly disappeared and eighteen new ones appeared. But these new names did not correspondingly replace the ones that had disappeared. Those names lost are Bhadaini (which later re-emerged after the setting up of a pumping station for the City's water supply), Pareshnath, Sajada, Vaidyanath, Hingu, Awadh, Haḍa, Kumarswami, Sadananda, Pandey (between Narada and Sarveshwar-Gangamahal ghats), Manhar, Saptarshi, Ramananda, Vishweshwar, Nrisingha Dada, Matsyodari, Duncanganj and Sabitabad (or Saretabad). The new ghat names were Kacha, Tulsidas, Buchraj, Chouki, Nala, Koaree, Amrit Rao, Ganga Mahal, Panda, Munshi, Bhonsla, Chorgalia, Shitla (between Raj Rajmandir Poosta and Lal Ghat), Bala Bai, Mahutha, Gola, Shuka and Phuteshwar.

This trend in name-changing slowed down, however, during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Thus, a comparison of earlier ghat lists with the list of 1868 shows that only five ghat-names, which had continued to exist up to Prinsep's period in the first quarter of that century, were dropped around the second quarter of nineteenth century. The dropped names are, Kewalgir, Rajrajeshwari, Rajballabh, Mashan, and Vireshwar. During the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the names of

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the eight ghats that appeared for the first time are Ganesh, Naghambar (Digambar), Ray Girdharlal, Bala Bai, Baji Rao, Sindhia, Gangamahal, and Pritam Singh.

There is also another important point in the matter of naming and that is it was neither rare nor unnatural for an old name to continue to be used alongside the new name. For example, though Gangamahal Ghat was the new name of Sarveshwar Ghat, both names continued with so much popularity that the Tirth Sudhar Trust mentions it as Sarveshwar or Gangamahal Ghat and a modern researcher called it the Sarveshwar-Gangamahal Ghat.

The construction and renovation of ghats received great impetus, especially around the beginning of the nineteenth century, and this was a direct effect of a period of Hindu regeneration within the backdrop of improved law and order in the City after the British occupation, of the religious neutrality of the new rulers, and finally, of the loving and respectful concern of the Hindu chiefs and the wealthy from all over India for Varanasi.

THE LAYOUT OF GHATS

Maharaj Balwant Singh of Varanasi has been credited with planning the layout of the ghats over the entire riverbank through the City in such a way that the Ganga only deposits sand on the right bank, leaving the City free from any deposits.[195] The current of the river, which flows from south to north along the whole eastern outskirts of Varanasi, has been diverted by the construction of Ramnagar Fort at the south-east end of the City on the right bank of the Ganga. The current has again been diverted by the construction of Shivala Fort on the left bank of the river. Thereafter, it flows on towards Dashashwamedh Ghat, to Panchaganga Ghat, and on to Raj Ghat, thus maintaining a straight course. Consequently, sufficient water has always been available for the ghats of the City. According to one opinion, the foundation of the fort at Ramnagar has adversely affected the current, resulting in the possibility of the bank shifting from its present position to the east,[196] but this does not seem so tenable an outcome.

BUILDERS OF THE GHATS AND THEIR MOTIVES

The Marathas took the leading role in the construction and renovation of ghats in Varanasi. Peshwa Baji Rao[197] himself was one among the

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Maratha chiefs who contributed largely to the beautification of the City and its ghats. Religious sentiment, love and regard for the City, and also the desire for name and fame, prompted chiefs, including the Marathas, to construct or renovate ghats. These feelings are evident in a letter from Baija Bai, the widow of Sindhia, to Sir Charles Metcalfe in July 1834[198] on the occasion of the construction of Sindhia Ghat when she writes, 'In the hope of reward in future state and of a good name in this world, I resolved to build a ghat at the City of Benares.' Such religious and temporal factors were more or less present in the case of others who undertook such works too.

The ghats were built with sand stones collected from the quarry of Chunar and brought by river traffic. This was both troublesome and expensive. Again, it was not unlikely that builders had to confront a host of problems with such a gigantic task, especially when the work was carried on through agents and directed from distant places like Puna. Baija Bai, who had herself been staying in the City during the construction of Sindhia Ghat, hinted at certain difficulties in her letter to Sir Charles Metcalfe. In a tone of despair she wrote :

> 'I there (Benares) established a banking house (Kothi) to furnish funds for the building (of ghats) and for charitable purposes; obstructions have been thrown in the way, so that work does not proceed so quickly as it ought, and the reputation of the Kothi has been injured and this is a constant source of shame to me.'[199]

DISPUTES OVER GHATS

The builders were generally the owners and their rights over the ghats were also usually recognized. But the ghatiyas and the Gangaputras, who attend the bathers and pilgrims, also claimed rights to the ghats. Thus, it was not infrequent that confrontations would take place between these parties. Consequently, court cases were fought over construction, possession, and ownership of ghats, and also over the mutual rights and privileges relating to their use. Sometimes these feuds led to the use of physical force resulting in bloodshed. Below are a few examples of disputes with regard to ghats.

The possession of the Umraogir Pusta Ghat formed a matter of dispute between Pandit Ranganath, Rajguru of Nepal, and the heirs of Babu Harikissen Das in 1846.[200] Harikissen, who had built this ghat, took possession of the site from a Brahmin on condition of paying Rs. 5/- per month, which was paid for some time and then stopped. That Brahmin, the

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owner of the site, sold the ground on which the ghat was built to the Rajguru who, by virtue of a deed of sale, wanted to take possession of the ghat and the building appertaining to it. Upon the case being referred to court, it was decided by the Sessions Judge that as the Brahmin's rights were confined to only Rs. 5/- per month, which he alone could transfer, his sale of that property to the Rajguru was illegal; hence the heirs of Babu Harikissen Das should hold uncontested possession of the building and ghat erected by Harikissen.

Another example is a feud between the proprietors of the Rajmandir Ghat and the Umraogir Pusta Ghat over the construction of the stepping stones below the Rajmandir Ghat. It was because of this feud that stepping stones could not be constructed below the Rajmandir Ghat for a certain period.[201]

Once, a person no less than the Sindhia was offended when he wanted to repair the Vireshwar Ghat and earnestly sought the permission of the Gangaputras, but they did not comply with his request.[202]

ACCESSION OF THE MUSLIMS TO GHATS

Though the Muslims formed a sizeable number of the population in Varanasi, they had hardly any regular access to the Ganga via the ghats because these were owned mostly by Hindus, with only Hindu residential quarters almost all along the riverfront. This led to the establishment of the rights of Hindus over the ghats. Muslims, of course, had no special attraction for the Ganga, but rather apathy towards the rituals Hindus performed there; but they also needed access to the water of the river. So to facilitate Muslim use of the Ganga, parts of a few ghats, such as Munshi Ghat,[203] were later reserved for them.

THE SINGULAR SERVICE OF BUILDERS AND RENOVATORS

In the absence of any public or Government agency to undertake the gigantic task of constructing and the constant repairing and renovating of the ghats prior to and during our period, the role of individuals in this respect assumed a special significance. Without such initiatives the City's riverfront and whole eastern section—invaluable religious, cultural and business considerations—would have been exposed to constant and permanent damage. In a few cases only the Government Committee for Local Improvement, which was but short lived, came forward to offer support in this direction.

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One of the great utilities of the stone-built ghats and their adjoining embankments (*pustas*) was that they protected the City from the ravages of the strong current of the Ganga, especially during its high rise in the rainy season. Jayanarayan referred to the existence of numerous embankments and held that the pusta named after Mir Rustam (adjoining Mir Ghat) was the greatest among them. It was, according to his calculation, fifty cubic feet in height and three hundred cubic feet in length.[204] Constant repairs and reconstruction of these ghats and embankments were urgently needed, since the currents were constantly breaking off and carrying away the stones from old and broken ghats. We have already referred to how the Shivala Ghat had been repeatedly damaged during rains, and how the whole adjacent area had been exposed to severe landslides.[205]

This utility of the ghat embankments, especially during the rainy season, was noted by William Hodges, a renowned British painter, who visited the City. Having examined the Jalsai Ghat in 1781, he made the following observations :

> 'Many buildings on the banks of the river which engage the attention, and invite to further observation prove, on a more minute investigation, to be only embankment, to prevent the overflowing of the water from carrying away the banks, at the season of the periodical rains, and for some time after, when the river is high, and the current strong. The most considerable of these embankments is called Galsi (Jalsai) Ghat; the splendour and elegance of which as a building, I was induced to examine, but found upon ascending the large flight of steps from the river, nothing behind this beautiful facade but the natural bank....'[206]

We may conclude from the above study that whatever the motives of the builders and renovators may have been, they were in truth instrumental in both beautifying the riverfront and protecting the City from the onslaught of the river. And for this singular service they deserve special credit.

APPENDIX

GHATS IN EVOLUTION*

1	2	3	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Pre-medieval List	Medieval List (Girvana Texts) 1625-50	Modern List	Mahalla List (1781-1809)	Jayanarayan List (1800-1810)	Prinsep List 1822	1868s List (Bax Collection)	1920s List (Survey of India—Benaras City Map)	Tirtha Sudhar Trust List—1931	Kashichitra List 1938	Rambachan List—1973
			Asi Ghat (1796)	Asi	Asi	Assi-Sangam Ghat	Asi	Asi	Asi	Asi
	Lolark	—	—	—	Kachaghat	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Lalamishra	—	Lalamishra
				Bhadani	Tulasidas	Tulasi	Tulasi	Tulasi	Tulasi	Tulasi
								Bhadini Pump Station		Bhadaini
						Ganesh				
							Janak Ghat	Janaki-kachha Janaki-pakka	Janaki	Janaki
				Pareshnath		Naghambar (Digambar) Ray Giridharilal				
				Akrur				Akrur		Akrur
					Buchraj	Bachhraj	Bachhraj	Bachhraj	Basraj	Batsaraj
				Sajada						
							Prabhudas	Prabhudas	Prabhudas	Prabhu
				Baidyanath						
							Shiwala			
				Nirjalee/ (Niranjana)				Shiwala-pakka Shiwala-kachha	Panchakot	Shiwala
								Shiwala-pakka Shiwala-kachha	Chetsingh	Chetsingh
				Nirvani			Shiwala	Nirvani or Niranjani		Niranjani
								Shiwala-pakka Shiwala-kachha		
Swapneshwar			Shewalla Ghat		Shiwala	Shiwala	Shiwala	Shiwala-pakka Shiwala-kachha	Shiwala	
				Dandi	Dandi	Dandi			Dandi	Dandi
	Rameshwar									Gular
				Hanuman Awadh	Hanuman	Hanuman	Hanuman	Hanuman	Hanuman	Hanuman
			Mussan Ghat (1781 & 1796)	Shmashan	Masan	Masan	Masan (Harish Chandra)	Hanuman Harish Chandra (Burning Ghat)	Harish Chandra (Burning Ghat)	Mysore Harish Chandra (Burning Ghat)

* For an illustration of Varanasi ghats (a painting on cloth) during seventeenth & eighteenth centuries, see Dr Harishankar—*Kashi ke Ghat*, Varanasi, 1996.

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1	2	3	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Pre-medieval List	Medieval List (Girvana Texts) 1625-50	Modern List	Mahalla List (1781-1809)	Jayanarayan List (1800-1810)	Prinsep List 1822	1868s List (Bax Collection)	1920s List (Survey of India—Benaras City Map)	Tirtha Sudhar Trust List—1931	Kashichitra List 1938	Rambachan List—1973
				Lalee	Lalee	Lalee	Lalee	Lalee-Pakka		Lalee
	Kedar Ghat		Kedar Ghat (1796)	Kedar	Kedar	Kedar	Kedar	Kedar	Kedar	Kedar
			Haḍa							
				Choukee	Choukee	Choukee	Ckoukee	Choukee-2 Ghats		Choukee
			Kumarswami							
					Nala	Nala		Nakha		Nakha
				Kshemeshwar			Shameswar (Shyameshwar)	Someshwar		Someswar
				Sadananda						
	Man-Sarovar			Man-Sarovar	Man-Sarovar	Man Sarovar	Man Sarovar	Manas Sarovar		Manas Sarovar
				Narad			Narad	Narad		Narad
					Keewaree	Kawari				
				Pandey						
					Umrit Rao Ghat	Amrit Rao	Raja Ghat	Raja	Raja	Raja
				Manhar						
							Ganga Ghat	Khoree		Khoree
	Sarveshwar Ghat			Sarveshwar	Gangamahal		Rangmahal	Sarveshwar or Gangamahal		Sarveshwar Gangamahal
							Babua Pande Ghat			
					Ponreh	Pande	Pande	Paureh-kachha	Paureh	Pande
								Paureh-pakka		
	Chatush Shashthi			Chaushatti	Chaushatti	Chaushatti	Chausatti	Dhobi		Dhobi
	Yogini Ghat			Yogini	Yogini			Chaushatti	Chaushatti	Digpatia
									Yogini	Chaushatti
				Rama		Rama	Rama	Rama		Rama
				Saptarshi				Dwarbhanga		
					Moonhee	Munchi	Munsi	Munsi	Munsi	Munsi
										Dwarbhanga
				Kewalgiri	Kewalgir					
				Ahalya		Ahilyabai	Ahillia Bai	Ahalya Bai	Ahalya Bai	Ahilya Bai
			Shetulla Ghat (1781 & 1796)		Sheetla Ghat	Sheetla		Sheetla		Sheetla
	Dashashwamedh			Dashashwamedh	Dashashwamedh	Dashashwamedh	Dashashwamedh	Dashashwamedh	Dashashwamedh	Dashashwamedh
				Ramananda						
				Prayag	Prayag			Prayag	Prayag	Prayag
	Someshwar Ghat		Maun Mundil Ghat (1996)	Man Singha	Man Mundil	Manmandal Ghat	Manmandir	Manmandir	Manmandir	Manmandir
				Man Singh Ghat						
			Teepor Bhoroye Ghat (1796)	Tripur Bhairavi		Tripura Bhairavi		Tripura Bhairavi	Tripur Bhairavi	Tripura Bhairavi
										Tripura Bhairavi
	Vriddhaditya Ghat									Tripura Bhairavi

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1	2	3	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Pre-medieval List	Medieval List (Girvana Texts) 1625-50	Modern List	Mahalla List (1781-1809)	Jayanarayan List (1800-1810)	Prinsep List 1822	1868s List (Bax Collection)	1920s List (Survey of India—Benaras City Map)	Tirtha Sudhar Trust List—1931	Kashichitra List 1938	Rambachan List—1973
	Jarasandha Ghat		Meer Ghat (1796)	Meer Ghat	Meer	Mir Ghat	Mir Ghat Nepali Ghat	Meer Phuta Nepali	Meer Nepali	Meer Phuta Nepali
			Lulla Davey Ghat (1796)	Lalita	Lulita Ghat	Lalita	Lalla Ghat	Lalita	Lalita	Lalita
				Rajrajeshwari	Rajeshwari Ghat Umraogir Pooshta		Umraogar Bauli	Omrao Gir Bauli		Amrohagiri Bauli
			Jul Sayme Ghat (1796)	Bishweshwar Jalshaye	Jalsye Ghat	Jalshaye	Mari Jalsai Ghat	Jalsahi	Jalshaye	Jalasai
				Rajballabh Mashan	(Rajballabh Smashan at this spot)				Pishach	
			Munkameeka Ghat	Manikarni	Munikurnike	Manikarnika	Mankaranika Ghat	Ahalyabai Manikarnika (for cremation) Ahalyabai Manikarnika (for bathimg)	Manikarnika	Manikarnika
						Waji Rao	Raji Rao Ghat	Baji Rao Manikarinika		Baji Rao (Manikarnika)
	Siddhi Vinayak Ghat Bireshwar Ghat			Bireswar	Siddhi Vinayak Ghat Bireshwar					
						Sindhila Ghat	Sindhila	Scindhia	Sindhia	Sindhia
			Shunkutta Ghat	Sankata Ghat	Sankata	Sankata		Sankata Ghat		Sankata Ghat Gangamahal
Bedeshwar			Bedessur Ghat (1796)			Yamash	Yameshwar		Yam Ghat	
				Gular	Ghoosla Goolur	Ghosla	Kausilla	Bhousta or Kasaulia	Ghoshala	Bhousla
	Nageshwar Ghat Agnishwar Ghat			Agni	Ugniswar	Agnishwar	Ganpal (Ganput= Ganesh)	Nayaghat (kuchha) Nayaghat (Pakka) or Ganesh	Augnishwar	Nayaghat Ganesh Agnishwar Mehta
	Ram Ghat		Ramghat(1796) Chore Ghat (1796) Mangala Gouri (1796)	Shri Ram Chour Mangala Gouri	Ramghat Chorghat Mungula Gouri	Ram Chor Mangala Gouri	Ram Chor Ghat Mangala Gouri Bala Ghat	Ram Chor Bala or Mangala Gouri	Ram Mangala Gouri Balaji	Ram Bala or Mangala Gouri

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VARANASI

1	2	3	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Pre-medieval List	Medieval List (Girvana Texts) 1625-50	Modern List	Mahalla List (1781-1809)	Jayanarayan List (1800-1810)	Prinsep List 1822	1868s List (Bax Collection)	1920s List (Survey of India—Benaras City Map)	Tirtha Sudhar Trust List—1931	Kashichitra List 1938	Rambachan List—1973
				Nrisinghadada						
			Bindumadhav Ghat	Punch Gunga Ghat	Shri Bindumadhav	Panchaganga	Panchganga	Panchaganga	Panchaad	Panchganga
			Madho Ray (1796)		Madhoraj	Madhoraj		Banimadhav	Benimadhav	
						Benimadhav		Panchganga		
	Durga Ghat		Durgha Ghat (1796)	Durga	Doorga Ghat	Durga	Durga	Durga	Durga	Durga
	Brahma Ghat		Brahma Ghat	Chorgalia Ghat			Brahma	Brahma	Brahma	Brahma
			Brahma Ghat	Brahma Ghat		Brahma	Brahma	Brahma		
			Rajmandir	Rajmandir Poosta						
			Sheetla	Shitla	Sitla	Seetla	Shitla	Shitla		
				Lalsahagarh	Lal Ghat	Pritam Singh Lal	Lal	Lall	Lal	Lal
				Gye Ghat (1781 & 1796)		Gaee	Gai	Gai	Gai	Gai
						Bala Baee	Bala Bai		Balabai	Balabai
					Mathura Ghat		Mathura Ghat	Mata	Matha	
Trilochan	Trilochan Ghat		Trilochan	Trilochan	Trilochan	Trilochan	Trilochan	Trilochan	Trilochan	
				Naya Ghat (1796)						
					Gola Ghat		Gola	Gola	Gola	Gola
			Matsyotari							
				Shuka Ghat	Babu Suka	Sake Ghat				
							Nandu	Narad	Nanda (Narad)	
							Sakka (Pakka)		Pakka (Sakka) Ghat	
			Telianala	Teleeanala	Telianala	Tilianala Ghat	Tiliya Nala		Telianala	
				Phuteshwar Ghat						
			Pehlad Ghat(1796)	Pruhlad Ghat	Pralhlad Ghat	Prahlad	Pahlad	Prahlad	Prahlad	
						Nayaghat	Naya			
	Gou Ghat									
			Rajghat (1796)	Raj Ghat	Rajghat	Rajghat	Rajghat	Rajghat	Rajghat	
							Khirki			
				Dankinganj						
				Sabitabad						
				(Saritabad)						
Adikeshava				Baruna Sangam		Adikeshav				Adikeshav

NB : Spellings of the Ghats' names have been retained mostly as in the original lists.

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NOTES & REFERENCES

1. *Benares and Its Ghâts*, pp. 142-54. Published by the Kashi Tirtha Sudhar Trust, Benares, Allahabad-1931. Henceforth cited as *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust.
2. James Prinsep, *Map of Banaras*, 1822. Henceforth cited as Prinsep-Map of Benares.
3. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
4. Prinsep-Map of Benares; According to Kubernath Sukul this ghat was built by Amrit Rao Peshwa in 1807. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 275.
5. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
6. See Mahalla List of 1796, Chapter II; Census of Benares, Prinsep: Chapter III, Appendix.
7. E. B. Havell, *Benares the Sacred City*, p. 125.
8. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
9. Rambachan Singh, *Varanasi* (in Hindi), p. 80. Henceforth cited as Singh, *Varanasi*.
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11. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 391.
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17. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 141-54.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. Sarayu Prasad Singh, *Varanasi ke Ward tatha Unki Visheshatayen*, *Souvenir of the Varanasi Nagar Mahapalika*—(No page number). Henceforth cited as *Souvenir—Varanasi Nagar Mahapalika*.
22. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
23. *Ibid.*, Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
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26. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 207-08.
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34. See Mahalla List of 1796 : Chapter II.
35. *Ibid.*

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37. See 'Kashi Chitra' in *Kashi Khandam*, published by Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Varanasi.
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40. Sir Henry M. Elliot, *Memoirs of the History, Folk- lore and Distribution of the Races of the North Western Provinces of India*, Vol. I, p. 126.
41. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
42. See *Kashi Chitra.*
43. Home Dept. (Public) Cons. 1 August 1788, No. 3, Paper A.
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50. H. R. Nevill, *Benares : A Gazetteer*, p. 242.
51. *Ibid.*
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71. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

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84. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
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96. *Ibid.*
97. Prinsep, *Benares Illustrated.*
98. See Town Guide Map of Benares of 1918-19, twelve inch, Benares City, sheet no.2.
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100. Prinsep, *Map of Benares.*
101. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
102. See Chapter VI : Hindu Religious Complex.
103. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 272.
104. Sadasiva Naik's letter to the Peshwa (8th April, 1735), quoted in Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 272-73; Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 296; Peshwa Daftar—17/36.
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112. Prinsep, *Benares Illustrated*, Plate 13.
113. Foreign Dept. Political, January 1831 No. 15. Copy of the letter attached therewith.
114. Foreign Dept. Political, 24 July 1834, Nos. 60-61.
115. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 72-73.
116. *Ibid.*
117. Havell witnessed this ghat in a dilapidated condition as late as in the first decade of the 20th century. Havell, *Benares, the Sacred City*, pp. 138-39; Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 393.
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127. *Ibid.*
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138. See *Kashi Chitra.*
139. E. B. Havell, *Benares, the Sacred City*, p. 149.
140. Ghats, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
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142. Prinsep recorded that this site was purchased in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, *Benares Illustrated.*
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145. *Kashi Khandam*, 59/114-16.
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150. See *Kashi Chitra.*
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159. See *Kashi Chitra.*
160. *Ghats*, Tirtha Sudhar Trust, pp. 142-54.
161. Singh, *Varanasi ke Ward* : 'Ward Doodh Vinayak', *Souvenir—Varanasi Nagar Mahapalika*; name of the *Gomasta* of the Raja of Kotah Bundi in Varanasi was Ramkrishna Tewary who had been in the City in 1798. COV., Residency records, Basta I, Vol. 3, p. 37.
162. Home Dept. (Public) Cons. 1 August 1788, No. 3, Paper A.
163. Ghoshal—*Kashi Parikrama.*
164. Source : Rai Krishna Das, Founder—Director of the Bharat Kala Bhawan, Varanasi.
165. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
166. See *Kashi Chitra.*
167. Havell, *Benares*. p. 155.
168. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
169. Quoted in Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 234.
170. Prinsep's references to this ghat suggest that it was constructed in the first quarter of the nineteenth century or even before. Kubernath holds that the lady was a resident of Gwalior; *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 276.
171. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
172. See Mahalla List of 1796 : Chapter II.
173. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
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176. *Kashi Khandam*, 69/167; 75/19; 47; 84/42.

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177. Vaman Balakrishna Dikshit, Narayan Dikshit Patenakar, pp. 48-49. Quoted in Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 299.
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179. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55. According to Kubernath Sukul this ghat was built by the same Nathu Bala of Puna who had constructed the Trilochan Temple. *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 275.
180. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40-55.
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182. Vide Town Guide Map of Benares of 1918-19, twelve inch, Benares City, sheet no. 1.
183. See *Kashi Chitra*.
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185. See Guide Map of the Benares of 1918-19, twelve inch, Benares City, sheet no. 1.
186. Singh, *Varanasi*, pp. 40 -55.
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191. See Table of Mahallas : Chapter II.
192. See Chapter VI.
193. See *Kashi Chitra*.
194. Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 276.
195. Mishra and Vedi, *Banaras*, p. 56.
196. R. L. Singh, *Banaras*, p. 44.
197. Peshwa Daftar, 30/131 & 180 etc.
198. Foreign Dept. Political, 24 July 1834, Nos. 60-61.
199. *Ibid.*
200. Pre-Mutiny Records, Benares Collectorate 1846, Register No 9, p. 447.
201. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 395.
202. Prinsep, *Benares Illustrated*, Plate 17.
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204. Ghoshal, *Kashi Parikrama*, p. 148.
205. See Shivala Ghat in this chapter.
206. William Hodges, *Travels in India during the years 1780, 1781, 1782 and 1783*, pp. 60-61.

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CHAPTER IX

THE ECONOMY

PRIME ROLE OF THE SHROFFS

In the eighteenth century, the deterioration of law and order in the City adversely affected its economy. Able and efficient administration under the British led to the restoration of law and order and a revitalization of the local economy.[1] Subsequent circumstances, however, proved that this revitalization would be short-lived.

The following classes of people played a vital role in the economy of the City during the period under review: Shroffs, merchants and businessmen, the *rais*, including landowners and petty chiefs, and various other professional classes.

The shroffs or *mahajans*, the moneylenders, were the arch of the economic structure of the City and they exerted powerful influence on the other economic classes. The moneylending profession was monopolized mainly by those of the Vaishya caste, who generally hailed from Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, or Maharashtra . Prinsep's census shows that there were a good number of Brahmins and *Gosains* (a class of monks living in monasteries) who also were engaged in moneylending. These moneylenders and money-changers were either Hindus or Jainas, but never Muslims.

LISTS OF SHROFFS

We have placed in the Appendix a list of names, mostly bankers living in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, who sent papers to England certifying Warren Hastings on the occasion of his impeachment and had also expressed satisfaction at his acquittal of the charges brought against him.[2] An additional list of bankers who only congratulated Hastings on his being acquitted has also been placed in the Appendix.[3]

A close examination of these lists of names shows that the following names, popular in northern India, have been repeated twice or three times, with some listed even more often. These include: Ram Lakshman, Mohan,

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Govind, Gopal, Byejnath, Madho, Bishan, Kishan Lal, Sitaram, Gangaprasad, Kashinath, Ghanashyam, Balgovind, Futtechand, Gobardhan, Kalyan, Devi, Kanha, Ratan, Jaggo, Jivan, Thakur, Gokul and Balam Bhavani. Although many of these names are identical, it appears that the persons were different in many cases. On the other hand, one person running a *kothi*, or banking house, may also have joined up with another person or persons to form a separate kothi. In such cases it is not so unlikely that the same name would appear on the records of more than one kothi.

THE PRINCIPAL SHROFFS

According to an official record of 1789, the principal banking houses of the City at that time were as follows[4] :

Manohor Das, son of Chaturbhuj Das and a Gujarati : He was mentioned as the *Nagar Seth** or *Chowdhary* (head of the City's shroffs).

Bhawani Das	:	Brother of Gopal Das.
Monohar Das	:	Son of Gopal Das.
Dwarka Das	:	Son of Gopal Das.
Gokul Chand	:	Son of Gopal Das.
Ram Chand	:	Son of Gopal Das.
Mukund Lal	:	Son of Manohar Das.
Arut Ram Tewary	:	*Gomastah* of Arjunjee Nathjee

(All the above belonged to the Sahu family of the Agarwal caste)

Khederee Mall	:	Principal Gomastah of Gopal Das.
Lalla Kashinath	:	Son of Kashmiri Mall, he belonged to the Khatri caste.

Chutter Das
Baboo Futteh Chand**
Mahadeo Pathak
Baboo Govind Chand
Thakoor Das
Kashinath Nandram
Gohur (Girdhar?)
Gopal
Panjab Roy

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* Once Chaturbhuj Das himself had been Nagar Seth.

** He was the grandfather of Baboo Harishchandra, the famous Hindi writer.

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Madhooree Das
Raghonathji Kerkora
Bhugwat Roy
Khetsee Teeloksee : He possibly belonged to the Oswal community of the Jainas or was a Gujarati *baniya*.

THE NOUPATTI BANKERS

We have already referred to the noupatti bankers or mahajans and now a short account of their actitivies follows.[5] Perhaps *nou-patti* is derived from *nai patti*, a new group or guild, or from a trade centre that emerged near the Chowkhamba area. These noupatti bankers had close connections with that trade centre. According to Government records, the epithet 'nouputtee' was derived from the following episode :

When Nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah of Oudh demanded a tithe (*moosadura)* from the Varanasi bankers, nine of them shared the total amount of this loan and thus the term 'noupatti,' literally meaning nine (*nou*) shares (*patti*) originated. Of these nine bankers, the seven names available to us are Madho Ram Sahu, Futteh Chand Sahu, Arjun Jee Nathjee, Mathura Das Brij Narayan, Kumhun Das Sahu, Gopal Das Sahu and Gowal Das Sahu. The information available on these bankers is as follows :

Madho Ram Sahu had no children. His wife supervised the kothi. Futteh Chand Sahu was survived by a son who was living in Varanasi. No other details were uncovered regarding Arjun Jee Nathjee. Again, no other details were uncovered regarding Muthura Das Brij Narayan. Kumhun Das may also have been one Kumbhan Das, but other details were not uncovered.

Gopal Das Sahu and Gowal Das Sahu were brothers. Their father, Bhya Ram Sahu, had three other sons; Bhawani Das, Kishor Das and Bullum Das. Gopal Das Sahu, in turn, had six sons. The two eldest, Brij Mohan Das and Manohar Das, were born of one wife. The third, Dwaraka Das was the only son by a second wife and the remaining three Gokul Das, Ramchand and Motichand, were the sons by yet another wife. When Brij Mohan, the eldest son, died childless, Gopal Das made Ramchand manager of his banking house in Varanasi, which became known as the Brij Mohan Das Ramchand Das Kothi. The then gomastah of the house in Calcutta was Lala Motichand and there the banking house was known by the name of Motichand Gomastah of Ramchand.

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The firm of Gopal Das Manohar Das was established by Gopal Das in his life time. After Manohar Das's death inVaranasi in August 1818, his son Mukundlal became the representative and successor. Lala Motichand was also the gomastah of this firm's Calcutta operations.

After Bullum Das died childless, Gopal Das handed over charge of Bullum's banking house to Dwaraka Das. In Varanasi, this house became known as Bullum Das Dwaraka Das and in Calcutta by the name of Gopal Das Harkishan Das. From the early 1780s, it was this banking house that became known as the *kothi kalaun* or 'principal banking house.' This was the first kothi among others established in Calcutta. When Dwaraka Das died, his widow Sitala Bahu, an active and energetic woman, became the sole proprietor of this kothi.*

As Motichand had no children, he appointed his elder brother, Gokul Chand, the *malik* and manager of all his concerns with the concurrence of their father, Gopal Das. This house was known as Gopal Das in Varanasi and by Gokul Das Motichand in Calcutta.

Gowal Das was the second son of Bhyaram Sahu. He separated from his eldest brother, Gopal Das, took his share and conducted his kothi independently. He had only one kothi in Varanasi. Bhawani Das, the third son of Bhyaram Das, was survived by his son, Hurkishen Das, and grandson, Jaykishen Das. Their banking houses were known in Varanasi by the name of Bhawani Das Hurkishen Das and the manager of this house in Calcutta was Baboo Benee Das. Kishore Das, the fourth son of Bhyaram, died young and no kothi was run in his name after his death.

GOSAIN MERCHANTS

Along with the Noupatti bankers, there were also a good number of Gosain bankers. These were the *mohants* or heads of temples and/or monasteries, who were also in the business of moneylending. A list of Gosain merchants of the last quarter of the eighteenth century has been assembled from the list of addresses to Warren Hastings and has been placed in the Appendix.[6]

According to Prinsep's 1829 census, most of the City's 2500 Gosains were merchants.[7] Jayanarayan Ghoshal also mentions the flourishing business and huge properties of the Gosain merchants in his account of Varanasi.[8] The names of Gosain merchants and the Government's business transactions with them appear frequently in Government records.[9]

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* For details, see Condition of Women in Chapter V.

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SHROFF BUSINESSES

A closer look into the activities of the shroffs reveals (a) the agencies of the banking houses; (b) modes of determining the interest rates levied by them; (c) classes of people who received loans; and (d) their business relationships with the British Government.

The chief business of the shroffs was to grant loans to various parties through different agencies. Generally, shroffs maintained kothis in Varanasi and Calcutta with the head office in Varanasi. Some shroffs had agencies in other places. For example, the house of Gopal Das had agencies in Murshidabad, Patna, Gaya, Ghazipur, Mirzapur, Lucknow, Bereilly, Jaipur, Nagpur, Surat, Bombay, Masulipattam, Madras, Tanda, Phulpur and Puna.[10]

Various interest rates were levied by the shroffs in Varanasi for different types of transactions, the following were the most important during the 1790s[11] :

1. In cases of transactions between shroffs who either had kothis or had active loans between the parties, the interest ran from 4 to 6 annas per month per 100 rupees provided the parties were 'very principal and creditable'. Otherwise, the current or ordinary rate of interest on loans from bankers to bankers was 8 annas per 100 rupees or 6 per cent per annum.

2. The interest rates per Rs 100 shroffs demanded on loans to merchants, traders and jewellers were as follows :

(a) The single loan rate was set at 8 annas per month.

(b) The rate for a second credit was12 annas per month.

(c) The rate for a third credit was16 annas per month.

3. In cases of transactions secured by property from natives of Gujarat and Maharashtra, the shroffs applied various rates. For example, upon pledges of uncoined gold to the value of Re. 1, annas 2, they advanced Re. 1, thus reserving a surplus of one eighth of the pledged amount as security, and charged 8 annas per month interest per Rs. 100.

Rates on loans made in this way were called *hundi*. It was actually a bill of exchange, a draft or a cheque which was also known as *ugahin*, meaning money lent on interest. A banker's runner carried money in a bag and lent it out on *kisti*. For these small loans transacted with runners the interest was at the rate of 48 per cent per annum. Thus, the party borrowing Rs.10 promised to pay back Rs.12, annas 8 at the rate of Re.1

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per month, and in like manner, if the borrower got Rs 20, he was to repay Rs 25 at the rate of Rs 2 per month till the debt was repaid. This method of calculating interest and monthly payments was used for sums not exceeding Rs 100. While these rates are exorbitant for legitimate commerce by today's standards, it can also be said that such profits were justified by the risks entailed.

The types of people who utilized the shroffs were merchants, other shroffs[12] and shopkeepers. The landed class and the petty chiefs also took out loans, especially when under pressure to pay revenues to the authorities. For example, Raja Chet Singh depended much on the shroffs to meet the heavy cash demands of the British Paramountcy.[13]

The British Government also borrowed from the shroffs from time to time to finance public works and other projects aimed at the spread of commerce or on the occasion of armed conflicts with native chiefs. The shroffs of the City with whom the Government negotiated such loans included Bhawani Das Sahoo, Ramchand Sahoo, Motichand Sahoo, Mukund Lal Sahoo, Futtehchand Sahoo, Balakishen Das Sahoo, Ramjee Callia,[14] Kashmiri Mall and a few others. On one occasion, Kashmiri Mall pleaded his inability to pay Rs 500,000 to Francis Fowke, Resident of the Government at Varanasi, on the grounds that he had been 'labouring under pecuniary stringency' and that he himself was not able to meet the claims of his creditors for want of cash.[15]

Loans made to men with small businesses and ordinary workers were commonplace.[16] It is interesting to note that there were also some students who received loans from the shroffs. These students would flock to the City for admission to the Government Sanskrit *Pathashala* (college) of Varanasi established in 1791, and during the period of their studies subsisted on credit granted by the baniyas on the condition of repayment when the student secured a scholarship from the College.[17]

In cases of small advances, the interest premiums levied on loans made in the City were no doubt very high, and though this did not remain unnoticed by the vigilant eyes of Resident Jonathan Duncan, he did not interfere, since it was felt that both borrowers and lenders had found accommodation therein and that this seemingly huge profit was only in proportion to the risk attending the distribution of minute advances of monies reported to have never exceeded Rs 100.[18]

Relations between shroffs regarding money lending, as well as trading, were full of tensions resulting from competition that sometimes ended in

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Government intervention. For example, Resident Grant pressed Lala Kashmiri Mall to meet the claims of Gopal Das according to an arbitrated decision in favour of Gopal Das. Grant suggested that Kashmiri Mall be pardoned provided bankers like Chaturbhuj Das and Manohar Das stood as security for the Lala, but none agreed to this proposal. The Gujarati shroffs had been in keen competition with the Agarwal shroffs, and the Gosain merchants with other shroffs. Once, when on the appeal of Gosain merchants, a *perwannah* was issued to the effect that the duties on their merchandise be levied at low rates and that no undue exaction be made from them, the other local merchants sought the same treatment from the British Resident. Accordingly, another perwannah was ordered to be drawn up with a view to placing all local merchants on the same footing with the Gosain merchants in respect of duties on silk goods and raw silk.[19]

There were many shroffs in the money-lending business while also engaged in the import, export, purchase and sales of commodities like silks and cereals. Besides these shroffs there was a separate class of businessmen who devoted themselves solely to trade. The names of a good number of such businessmen have been found along with the names of the Nouputtee bankers in the aforementioned papers of address in favour of Warren Hastings.[20]

Many of these houses, including some shroffs, were also engaged in a thriving insurance industry that functioned under its own economics, with different premium schedules applicable to different risks.

Another lucrative business was the transfer of monies from one city to another, again known as *hundi*, on specified discount rates, roughly equivalent to present day 'demand drafts.' There was also a document known as a *darshani hundi* that was required to be paid in cash before sunset on the day of presentation at the risk of a business house being declared insolvent.

A regular *dak* post chain was run by some large business houses. For example, Raja Patni Mall had such a chain from Delhi to Calcutta (ca.1800-1820) where the courier could change horses and rest for the night.

A few business houses were licensed to mint coins for small local kingdomstates and instances of counterfeiting are also recorded. Even a modest run of surreptitiously minted 'Company' (British Government) coins, by a house so licensed, would yield a handsome profit.

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Although an older, established system, with the advent of Company rule some business houses that had been engaged in commissariat trade were also appointed suppliers of goods to the Company, which, of course would include its army. Similarly, other established houses, known as *Nilamiyas* or *Nilam wale*, auctioned off items the Company disposed of.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS WITH SHROFFS

At the outset, the Government was in favour of maintaining good relations with the bankers of the City and in redressing their grievances. Once when the merchants lodged complaints against an exaction of 1784 by the local *Darogah*, the latter was given a preemptory order to take great care that his subordinates should not create cause for a similar complaint in the future.[21] Again, the initiative of these Government servants made it possible to get letters of appreciation in favour of Warren Hastings from the bankers on the occasion of his impeachment and another of congratulations upon his acquittal.

But within two decades, by the close of the eighteenth century, the situation changed considerably. The well-known shroffs, including Gowal Das, Manohar Das, and others, lodged a detailed petition with the Governor General to redress various grievances. Among these, only one was considered, the remaining, the Government held, were extremely unreasonable and improper.[22] A second petition from the bankers, accompanying the first, suffered the same fate. Another proposal for the public endowment of the famous Gopal Lalji Temple was also denied.[23]

The issues raised in the first petition, presented below, throw light on the degree of change brought about in the economic customs of the City after1781.

1. Previously, when the bankruptcy of any banking house was suspected, creditors who received the first intelligence thereof went to the insolvent banker and demanded whatever they could get in payment of debts, whereas with the arrival of the British, creditors had to move a petition through the courts. But by the time the petition was delivered to the court and a summons was issued to the bankrupt party, the party had gone into hiding and the creditors had lost any opportunity to collect any monies owed. The bankers prayed to revive the old custom.

2. Formerly, when a person of social standing, like a shroff, would become insolvent and flee, he would take his entire family to escape the creditors searching for him. Ultimately being embarrassed by the situation,

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he would surrender to the creditors and promise that their money would be paid. To this end, adjustments would be made regarding the total debt and the debtor's ability to repay. Under British rule, however, a person in bankruptcy could stay at home and family members could roam about unconcerned about creditor reprisals, since judges would not allow any prosecution to be instituted against the children of bankrupt individuals, including bankers. Creditors, on the other hand, thought that such collection tactics should be allowed, reasoning that the children were all too often responsible for squandering the money of the creditor.

3. According to age-old practice, when a judge thought it necessary to get any particular entry from books, he would dispatch a respectable person to the banking house to inspect and extract pertinent data in whatever way necessary to serve the investigation. When British courts investigated, however, all of the banking house's books were demanded by the court. The bankers felt that in consequence of their books being produced in court, unrelated dealings and concerns of unimportance might be exposed to outside parties causing embarrassment.

4. As the Government accepted, on face value, the honesty and respectability of bankers, they were exempted from furnishing security documentation in various dealings. When these same bankers had matters before the Court of Appeals, however, the British would require such security.

5. In banking concerns, it was an old and established rule that descendants were responsible for repaying the debts of the previous four generations, whether or not they had inherited any wealth from the debtor. Under the British, if a person had not received the wealth and property of the father, the son could not be held responsible for the father's debts.

6. The bankers pleaded for the abolition of the system, introduced by the British Government, requiring the purchase of revenue stamps for filing or submitting official paperwork.

7. The British had introduced the system of deciding cases based on sworn testimony of witnesses under oath. The petitioners alleged that some persons were susceptible to take bribes from evil-minded persons and would give false testimony even under oath; consequently, cases were lost and they were ruined. The bankers suggested that when oaths were to be administered, the respectability of the person taking them should be thoroughly ascertained.

8. The bankers also alleged that several persons in the City would

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procure false vouchers and initiate litigation before the judge, proving their cases by means of false witnesses. They suggested that suspect cases involving false vouchers and witnesses be sent to the Noupatti bankers for proper verification and investigation.

9. Bankers who had lent lakhs (hundreds of thousands) of rupees to English gentlemen expressed utter helplessness when a regulation was issued that no prosecution should be admitted against any Englishman for a sum exceeding five hundred rupees.

None of the above points was entertained by the Government. The petitioners were told that their grievances and suggestions had to go through proper channels and to refer such matters to the *Sudder Dewany Adalat* where the petitions would receive such attention as deserved. The Government did, however, entertain one appeal allowing authorized *vakeels* to repair to banking houses to fully explain the suits in which they may be engaged to the bankers. Such vakeels, appointed to conduct banking house cases before the Sudder Dewany Adalat and Courts of Appeal, being better acquainted with the facts, could then plead cases before the court. Furthermore, this petition asked that in acting as authorized representatives of the court, vakeels be allowed to conduct cases without fear or apprehension that a judge might impose any penalties upon them.

THE RAIS

The *rais** class which consisted of the petty chiefs and landlords having either a temporary or a permanent residence in the city, men of high rank enjoying allowances and pensions from the British Government, or native rulers or agents of native states who transacted business, both secular and spiritual, on behalf of their masters; and miscellaneous others, left a considerable impact on the economic life of the City. Though some of these people carried on moneylending businesses, they maintained an identity as rais, quite distinct from the average shroff.[24]

The general progression and accumulation of wealth started with petty traders, then on to established businessmen, shroffs, landed gentry, and, finally, the zamindars and the aristocracy, the rais. Similarly, a downward flow of money would also start at the top, since, in most instances, people of this class ran into heavy debt and were fleeced by usurers. This was brought on by the squandering of wealth through various degenerating

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* For further details on the Rais, see Chapter XVIII.

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pastimes or vices leading to the neglect of estates, drawn out litigation, unwise investments, cheating by sycophants, etc., ultimately reducing one to a penurious existence.

It was characteristic of the rais to spend lavishly for various spiritual and secular purposes, such as charity to priests, *pandas* and pandits, construction and renovation of temples and ghats, opening of alms houses, digging of ponds, and also various forms of entertainment. Like the Gosain merchants and other moneyed men, the rais also owned real properties and resold them at a profit. They also set up market-places to rent to shopkeepers and mansions to accommodate pilgrims.[25]

Finally, they were great patrons of art and culture. Not only did they financially support such activities, but they were trained in music and sometimes were amateur-level craftsmen, some being highly gifted. They were the main preservers of the City's high traditions and local Banarasi culture, much like the elite of Bengal, especially in Calcutta.

VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL CLASSES

The social, economic, religious and cultural life of the City depended on the services of thousands of people of various professions. A study of these professions reveals the richness of life of the City as well as its manifold dimensions. On the other hand, it also shows how the special character of the City, as well as its affluence, were responsible for the origin of various professions.

A list of them (placed in the Appendix) indicates that out of 162 professions, 40 were taken up by both Hindus and Muslims, another 48 exclusively by Hindus and 26 solely by Muslims. We do not know with certainty about the remainder.

Study of this table of professions along with the Prinsep census[26] reveals that varying numbers of citizens were engaged in the following professions : religious and educational services, music, trading of grains, armed services, different types of smithies, leatherworkers, cultivation, clerical services, gardening, sanitation, different types of weaving, carriage, producing and selling of oil, milk production, confectioneries, selling of *paan* (betel), distilling of liquor, and entertainment.

Thus, *dharma* (ethics), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (pleasure) and *moksha* (salvation), the four ends of life according to Hindu scriptures, found full expression in the City's professional sectors.

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EUROPEANS

There were a considerable number of Europeans including the employees of the Government who were engaged in various private businesses in the City. James Augustus Grant, who was appointed Postmaster by the British Resident, entered into large trade concerns.[27] Jonathan Duncan reported to Edward Kay, Secretary to the Government on January 28, 1788, that there were many European merchants in Varanasi City who had '... nothing else but their own exertions and credit to depend on' and conducted 'their commerce on the same footing as the native.'[28] Europeans were engaged in businesses ranging from indigo planting to shopkeeping.[29] Some examples of these enterprises follow :

Frenchman, Monsieur La Blance, was a diamond merchant. Quieros, a son-in-law of La Blance, assisted his father-in-law in this business and carried on a trade for himself on a limited scale. Benjamin D. Aguilar, an Austrian, carried on as trade agent and otherwise on his own account. Thomas Scott was a diamond merchant. Davies kept a shop for European goods. Jacob was a professional silversmith and jeweller. Gurdiner was a merchant and Peter Federoff, a Russian, was a businessman, but the particulars of either of these enterprises are not known. There were also European wine merchants in the City, but sales of liquor to European soldiers of this station were discouraged by the authorities.[30]

VARANASI AS THE CENTRE OF TRADE

Varanasi was the chief trade centre of the North Western Province in the early days of the British administration when its position was challenged by both Mirzapur and Ghazipur. The rise of Mirzapur was due mainly to its identification by the Government as more convenient a depot for trade with the Deccan than Varanasi. Besides, Mirzapur had a flourishing market in forest products, including lacquer. Of course Varanasi continued to be the headquarters for the extensive business carried on with the dominions of the *Nawab* of Oudh.[31] Later on, a decline in local trade coincided with the decay of the river traffic. As transportation systems other than river traffic improved, the surrounding districts started directly importing, causing losses to Varanasi bankers on the once flourishing cargo assurance business. The case with rural exports was similar in that goods no longer had to reach these areas via Varanasi.

The exports from the City were consequently limited to the

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manufactured goods of the place, though the volume of this trade was by no means large considering the size of the population. Imports, the bulk of which were consumed locally, consisted chiefly of foodstuffs (especially cooking oil, ghee, and sugar), oil seed, cotton goods, building materials, brass, German silver sheets from Calcutta, and a fair quantity of gold and silver which was worked into jewelry by the local goldsmiths.[32]

Varanasi had no large-scale industry, but several of its cottage industries acquired world-wide fame.[33] In this regard the following items were remarkable—silk, mixed fabrics, embroidery, metal-work (gold, silver and brass), work on lac, leathers, articles of worship (mats, beads, prayer-rugs,etc.) ivory-carving, pottery, wood-carving, clay-work, leather-work, etc. The City was also a large trading centre for gold bullion, which was brought in from Calcutta and sold at a premium.

MARKET-PLACES AND SHOPPING CENTRES

A vast network of small and large market places and shopping centres was spread all over the City even before British rule. A picture of seventeenth and early eighteenth century Varanasi markets may be formed from the *Girvanavangmanjari* of Dhundhiraja. A description of these market-places based on the said Sanskrit text is now quoted below :

> 'The son of a Brahmin householder was asked to take only two silver coins and go to the Big Bazaar. There in the *Chatustambhapana* (lit., market with four pillars—modern Chowkhamba area in Varanasi) he was asked to change them into *Dhabukas* (of smaller denomination, during the British period a *Dhabu* or *Dhabbu* was a big copper coin equal to two *paisas*) at the shop of Musaka Madhavaji. The fact that the son could make so many purchases with only two silver coins (about the value of two rupees) shows how cheap commodities for daily use were in seventeenth century India. Two and a half seer of pure *ghee* could be purchased for half a (silver) coin, thus ghee was sold at sixteen silver coins per *maund*.
>
> For the day's dinner, the boy is asked to buy white sugar, *dal* or grams for preparing *puma* (sweet paste or pulp from boiled pulse of grams mixed with sugar or molasses). He also purchased asafoetida (*hingu* for flavouring and for frying *chonka*), cumin-seeds (*jiraka*), powdered turmeric (*haldi*), betel-nuts (*supari*), cardamoms (*ela*), cloves (*lavanga*), nutmegs and mace (*jati-phala* and *jati-patra*), *khadira* (maybe the *kattha* used in betel-leaves, prepared from the bark of the khadira tree). The betel-nuts, cardamoms, cloves, khadira, etc., are used in betel-leaves (*tambukapatra*), but ela, lavanga, jati-patra, jati-phala, etc., are also used in flavouring certain dishes. Camphor (*karpura*), musk (*kasturika*), and saffron (*keshara*), mentioned next, are used for both purposes. Amongst other articles purchased were *gorochana* (yellow orpiment, slightly fragrant, from urine or bile of

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cow, or from cow's head according to some), *ushira*, and *dashanga* (*dhupa*, incense famous in Tantras, etc.).

The son was further asked to purchase wheat-flour (*godhuma-churna*) passed through a piece of cloth (i.e., fine powder of wheat). It is interesting to note that the bargain was to be struck with a vow (*pratijnaya grihitwa*), possibly on the part of the merchant selling it, that there was no adulteration in the wheat-flour; this reminds us of modern practices of adulterations in foodstuffs and the black-markets. Also the son was asked to purchase *pista*, or unadulterated flour of *masha* (beans), of unmixed grams and of rice. Then from the vegetable market (*shaka-apana*, modern *shaka*-market or *shaka*-bazaar) he was to purchase *surana* (a bulbous root), the red and white *kandas* (bulbous roots, yams), the *karkatika* (cucumber), *budbudakas*(?), *kushmanda-phala* (a kind of pumkin-gourd), the yellow *kushmanda*, *parovarani*, ..., *tundi-phala* (a kind of gourd or cucumber), *patola-phala, karavellas* and the *panasa-phala* (bread-fruit, jack-fruit).

There was another market near the temple of Annapurna. From the shops near Annapurna-temple were available ripe and unripe plantains, the flowers of the plantain-tree and the root of the same (*kadali-garbhakanda*). Maharashtrians are fond of preparing dishes from *kadali-kusuma*, etc.

From this place the son was to go to the Kala Bhairava Market (i.e., market near the Kala Bhairava Shrine and named after the latter) where a number of *patra-shakas* or leafy vegetables were sold. Here were purchased leaves of *methi, tandula* (pot herb), *upodaki, chakramardaka, brihati*, the wild *karavellas* (these are very bitter), the leaves of red and white *kandas*. Tamarind (*tintini*) was not to be missed in the purchases, also *shringaveraka* (fresh undried ginger) and long leaves of the plantain-tree. Leaves of the plantain were used, and are still used, as plates in which meals are served.

The above account of special purchases shows that, as in modern times, vegetables, certain spices, special flours, etc., were purchased fresh whenever necessary, whereas other commodities such as rice, *dal* or pulses were stored in the house.'[34]

Some market-places were also set up in this period. While shopping centres like Chowk supplied various luxury and utility goods, market places of cereals and grains were scattered over different parts of the City for supplying essential commodities to the people. Localization of industries was also evident in the City. For example, in the Thatheri Bazar, a brazier market-place, a multitude of braziers manufactured and sold their wares. Also, the Kunj Gali area was famous as the sari and brocade textile market.

In Hindi, *bazar*, or market, has many synonyms with slight variations, e.g., *ganj* (a market-place, an emporium, a granary), *hats/hattis/hatiya* (a mart, a market, a bazar), *chouhatta* (a market at a crossroad), *chowk* (a square plot of ground, a market-place), *choubutra* (terrace; also used as

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market), *mandi* (a big market), *gola* (a market of grocers), *patti* (a market), *katra* (a market surrounded on all sides by walls).[35] Almost all of these variations will be found in the list of market-places of the City placed in the Appendix. For each of the market-places, we have noted the articles sold therein as far as possible.*

ORIGIN OF ONE MARKET-PLACE

The following is a description of how Duncan Ganj sprang up in the City in 1795.[36] This description also shows how a once desolate site within the City gradually became populated.

On March 29, 1795, Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident, appointed Radhamohun Mallik to construct granaries. Work was begun on the site of the old fort at Raj Ghat on the Ganga, the most fitting place for the purpose, the following day. When the walls were raised, information reached the City and the *zamindary* of Varanasi that granaries were being built by the Government. One day some *byaparies* (grain-merchants) came to Radhamohun and said they wished to bring their bullock carts loaded with grain to sell there on the site where the granaries were being built. A few days thereafter a similar application was received by Radhamohun from other merchants who said that if a ganj were erected, it would be very convenient to several merchants to sell their grain as soon as they crossed the Ganga at Raj Ghat.

On May12, Duncan also appointed Radhamohun as the agent to purchase grain for the Government. Radhamohun now planned to establish the type of ganj the byaparies had suggested earlier, as this, he held, would presumably be advantageous to the Government in purchasing grain as well. Then he sent for one Dumber Chowdry, a respectable man of the City, as it was through this man that Radhamohun had sold 50,000 to 60,000 maunds of Government grain under Duncan's order in October 1792 and had 'realized every piece through him without meeting with any difficulty.' The integrity and honesty of this man had impressed Radhamohun so much that he, as a grateful gesture, asked him to set up the new ganj and appointed him *chaudhari*.

Radhamohun submitted the following report to Duncan during the early stages of the ganj :[37]

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* The history of the names of some of these market-places, after which some mahallas have been named, can be found in Chapter II—Topograpahy.

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'By the blessing of the almighty God and under your (Duncan's) auspices and good name and thro' the influence of the said Chowdry the Gunge is well frequented and there come to it every day 400 or 500 bullocks loaded with grain; each bullock loads 4 maunds (and) on that calculation the grain importation is 2000 maunds where the Thannees or settled Ryets of Benares come to purchase the grain. Bullocks arrive in the Gunge between 6 and 9 o'clock in the morning and sell all the Grain before 2 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon. So there is left nothing unsold. In case there remains any quantity I purchase it and it has amounted to about 13,000 maunds of grain and barley....'

The name given to the ganj by the chaudhari and all the byaparies was Duncan Ganj and it proved to be a great advantage to the Government on several accounts. First, for purchasing and selling grain without putting the government to any expense, secondly, by saving the trouble of searching for the grain, and thirdly, by preventing the byaparies of other ganjs in Varanasi from raising the price of grains.

By seeing the daily workings of Duncan Ganj, several shroffs, merchants, *buckeel* and some of the other important persons of Varanasi proposed to settle there by building shops at their own expense if they would get the land as *bukhsheesnama* (grants) for the ganj. They argued that if they had bukhsheesnama, no other *hakeem* could deprive them of other possessions. Radhamohun sent this proposal to Duncan commenting :

'If this plan meet with your approbation, please order me that I may be able to prepare the Bukhsheesnama in Persian which will cause the old Fort to be inhabited and that side of Rauje Ghaut which had been uninhabited these many hundred years and thro' your good will towards the Ryots will now be restored to its former situation and daily increase more and more'.

Particulars of the proposed settlement show that 58 persons applied for land and the area of land requested by an individual ranged from 1 to 10 *bighas*. Most of the applicants were byaparies and the like who wanted lands for setting up shops. There were also some persons who wanted the land for constructing dwellings and *dharmashalas*.[38] Duncan also agreed to accept this proposal.[39]

DETAILS OF MARKET-PLACES

A detailed list of market-places of the City has been placed in the Appendix. This list shows that market-places were concentrated in the most populated areas of the City. Of course with the spread of new settlements in the outskirts of the City, new market-places sprang up in

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these areas as well. Besides these larger market-places there were innumerable *paan* (betel leaf) and sweetmeat stalls, actively patronized by local residents, situated in almost every corner of the City.[40] Here we furnish random descriptions of these markets from Mrs Ashmore, a European traveller of 1841, beginning with a narration of a market-place for animals.[41]

> 'At this place for horses and camels quite a number of horses of beautiful and strong breed were standing for sale in an open booth; these horses were not tied on the head as in Europe, but by long halters laid on forelegs. Here I was struck by the delicateness of shape and ardour of look of these noble animals of the East which seemed to me to be impatiently enduring their forced rest and were waiting like a beautiful slave girl for her deliverance from the fancy of an approaching buyer. In Benares we saw buyers busy with packing bundles on the back of patient and gentle camels. In the same way we happened to see merchandise being loaded in ships or huge transporting cars. One leg of these camels was tied at the knee in such manner that the poor creature supported itself on three legs only. Melancholy and resignation imprinted in their eyes reflected oddly in contrast to the boldness of the eyes of the horses.'

Then a graphic description of the activity and merchandise follows :

> 'Extraordinary rush and uncommon affluence were visible on all sides, which only a few towns in Central India are noted for. Benares is also famous for its trade in Zinc, Copper, Silk, and Cotton products as well as for production of opium and indigo.
>
> On every street exchange agents were found sitting with a heap of small shells (*kauri*) which served as small coins in India and in some parts of the islands of the Indian Archipelago. These people made a huge profit out of these by taking a certain percentage for exchanging each rupee. A bit farther, confectioners and fruit sellers spread out their most dainty tit-bits (delicacies) and were boiling syrup in iron pots on a small oven fired with coal and were stirring the solution with iron spoons. Coppersmith's workshops were usually many in number and were adorned with copper and brass vessels of various shapes and sizes. Bazars of Benares were provided with everyday necessities and domestic appliances of numerous kinds. Besides excellent sale of shawls, diamonds, pearls, and other costly items taking place through tradesmen of the place, many of them were engaged in making and dealing in the famous indigenous fabric made of gold and silver, called "Kinkhab" in India. The weaving of these pieces of art is jealously kept a secret by the makers which has not been possible to imitate in Europe till to-day. Nothing can also equal the beauty of embroidered velvet meant for turbans for the rich Indians, and this, on the head, seems to sparkle, as if from costly stones. These are masterpieces of art which no doubt even the most accurate mechanism is not able to make.'

Temporary shops and stalls were also opened on the occasions of Hindu and Muslim fairs and festivals, and in such stalls various

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articles of especially fashionable handicraft and smithy were sold. A government record of as early as 1788 informs us that brass pot and copper vessel peddlers were active at Madho Ray Ghat in the month of 'Catack' (*Kartik*) when great numbers of people gathered there to bathe in the Ganga on various religious occasions.[42] In the same record, it is mentioned that temporary bazars were held at Pishach Mochan Tank at certain times of the year when the Hindu pilgrims bathed there.

Let us now concentrate on Chowk, the shopping centre situated at the heart of the City. We discovered it first mentioned in the 1781 list of mahallas, though in all probability this shopping centre was far older. A detailed account of the Chowk is available again in the writings of Mrs Ashmore and those of Jadunath Sarvadhikari. With the growing affluence of the City, the area encompassing the Chowk also grew considerably. Jadunath wrote in 1857 that there were shops for preserved fruit, fruit sweetmeats, and also hubble-bubbles on the eastern side. He also wrote that there was a *Kotwali* on the western side and there were shops of clothes, *shatranjis*, carpets, etc., and also a dispensary to the south. Variety stores selling different articles like clothes, shoes, rosaries of *rudraksha* and crystal, articles made of iron and wood, perfumes, gold and silver thread, etc., were also to be had there. There were also many seats of the shroffs. All these elements comprised the shopping centre of the Chowk. The place was especially crowded during afternoons and evenings when the hawkers assembled there. Mrs Ashmore leaves us the following pen-picture of the Chowk in 1841 :

> 'Chouk "the principal square of the City" is surrounded by considerable buildings; the lower stories of which are shops, and the various wares are displayed in little open verandahs. Many of these shops are very amusing, as the goods are of a perfectly Eastern character. Here (is seen) piles of Mussleman slippers, of every colour and variety of embroidery, some of them extremely pretty, in an adjoining stall are perhaps every kind of hookah, curiously ornamented and as endless in form and novelty of design as the corresponding luxury which German pipe-shops furnish; next to these are generally the tobacco vendors, in which the fragrant weed is to be procured in every state from the dry form into which it was first converted from the plant, to the cheroot, or to the preparation for the hookah. The best tobacco is made at Chunar and is highly valued .... (There) are at least a dozen shops which are occupied by the begatelles, the prices of which are very moderate ... (possibly) a well painted and varnished one can be purchased for about two rupees.
>
> Here too, the Patna wax-candles are to be had as well as the linens from the same neighbourhood, the silks of Baughlepore (Bhagalpur), the rice from Patna, in

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extraordinary quantities and the sugar of Benares at the moderate price of three or four *seers* for the rupee, a *seer* being equal to two pounds.

The grain shops are not without their share of interest. In them many kinds of maize and pulses are to be seen, neatly arranged in little baskets, whilst the salesman hidden behind the pile, sleeps through the heat of the day, or indolently stretched at full length, smokes his hubble-bubble unless aroused by the arrival of a customer.

The money-changers are seated behind their heaps of coins, and are perhaps a little more on the alert than their brethren of the grain shop.... Their gold they carefully conceal from the public gaze but many of them have large stores of gold mohurs smugly showed away, either in their cumburbunds or in some secret recess.

The stalls for native female ornaments are very pretty; here every description of ring and pendant may be examined, but these which are made at Delhi, are frequently of a superior quality, besides being more diversified in the embellishment.

Occasionally, the Dirzees (tailors) are to be seen stitching away at some piece of native costume, or busily employed upon a comfortable "rissai" razai preparing its cotton lining and carefully quilting it in diamond shapes.

Native preserves and condiments are in great profusion. No butcher's meat is to be seen in this busy square (i.e., Chouk) as no "goshtwallas" (meat-sellers) would be likely to exhibit their supplies in that part of the City.'[43]

Naya Chowk, or 'new' chowk, was set up and had shops of clothes, old iron, etc. The City still has a Naya Chowk almost behind Chowk Police Station. This is possibly identical with this 'new chowk' and is a wholesale market today.

PRICES

Complete data regarding price variations, not only of Varanasi but all of India's main cities and rural areas during our period of review and the periods preceding and succeeding it, are essential for forming a full and clear idea of the price fluctuations in Varanasi. At this late date, however, it is almost impossible to collect such data. On the basis of some random figures as tabulated in Tables number 1 and 2, and placed in Appendix D, we can make some broad observations regarding price variations. What is particularly noticeable is that the inter-year fluctuation of individual prices as well as price levels in Varanasi over the period 1802-1822 is quite pronounced.[44] Here, all the commodities have been valued per maund or per seer in terms of one rupee.

Taking 1802 as the base year, the price index covering 12 (twelve) commodities rose for three consecutive years to 1804. Subsequently, the index came down and prices continued to fall through 1807, followed by another upswing in1808, a downswing the next year that preceded two

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subsequent years of price increases. Thereafter a downward trend continued from 1812 to 1816. The succeeding two years witnessed steep acceleration that virtually culminated in 1818. In this year the price index had soared to 133 from a 1802 base price of 100. During the period from 1819 through 1822 the price index again fell to its lowest levels.

Again, if we take 1813 as the base year, we find fluctuations with an upswing in 1814; a downswing in 1815 and 1816; upward again in1817 and1818, followed by consistently falling prices right through 1822.

The picture of individual price variations on key commodities also attracts our interest. Two major food items, wheat and dal, for example, which sold at Re.1.00 and Rs. 1.60 per maund respectively in 1802, became dearer (after periodical ups and downs) in 1810 with wheat being sold at Rs. 1.54 per maund and dal at Rs. 2.67 per maund. However, in 1818 the wheat price reached Rs. 2.35 per maund with dal at Rs. 2.42. In the following year, 1819, wheat fell to Rs. 2.11 per maund while the price of dal rose further to Rs. 2.67. Thereafter, a price deceleration trend continued for these two food items until 1822. This is reflected in the general index.

Table 1, which shows the average commodity-wise prices of articles in a given year, indicates price trends more accurately than Table 2. And although Table 2 only shows the prices of articles during a 2-year period, it includes more items than are incorporated in Table 1. Another notable feature of Table 2 is that it suggests how the prices of the same articles fluctuated in different months of the same year. These fluctuations are most likely due to supplies of grains to markets at different times of the year.

These tables definitely establish that in comparison to today, the rupee certainly had far greater purchasing power during this period, but it should also be remembered that incomes were miserably low and people had limited purchasing power. This is evident from the data we have on income furnished later in this chapter. Consequently, most of the people, including cultivators and others of low-income occupations could not derive much benefit from the higher value of the rupee. On the other hand, people engaged in occupations like money-lending, jewelry, and silk merchandizing and others of the high income group enjoyed the benefits of a higher valued rupee.

Secondly, the prices of some essential commodities, such as wheat, paddy, *jagri*, oil, etc., were slowly rising thus causing hardship to the poor.

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But again, in absence of records, we do not know all the circumstances leading to such a rise in prices. While the rise in prices of 1809 may be ascribed to the widespread Hindu-Muslim disturbances that year, the evident cause of the sharp rises of 1810 was the well-known House Tax Movement in that year. This is authenticated by Raja Uditnarain who informed the Governor-General that when cultivators and other workers ceased working during the House Tax Movement, it caused 'great injury to the public revenue'.[45] The consequent fall in production affected not only the price-pattern of 1810 badly, but quite possibly left an adverse impact upon 1811 as well.[46]

It may be presumed that one or more factors such as a demand-supply maladjustment owing to natural shortages due to population pressures, natural calamities, limited productive capacity and inadequate market arrival and tax-induced cost inflation, etc., were perhaps largely responsible for such rise in prices. In addition, the general development of trade,which has been suggested in a quotation from the District Gazetteer of 1909, may also have been responsible for the said price rises. This development of trade might have caused large regional outflows of essential commodities and the consequent local shortages causing a downward movement in the value of the rupee, a symptom of the inflationary upsurge of price levels. The following quotation, which gives some additional pieces of information regarding prices, substantiates what has already been observed :

> 'Among the many extant records dealing with the administration of Benares in early days, there are unfortunately few which refer to the prices of food grains then current. The rates prevailing (in Benares) during the first half of the 19th century probably differed but little from those ruling in other parts of the United Provinces, but the only safe assertion is that they were immeasurably lower than those at present obtained. It was nothing unusual for wheat to sell at one maund to the rupee, while barley and gram were not infrequently half as cheap again. In 1803 the price of gram in April and May (in Benares) was 60 seers and that of wheat 50 seers to the rupee; and a rise to 30 and 26 seers respectively in the following September caused great distress. In November 1820 wheat was selling for 29 seers, gram at 31 and barley at 42 seers; while again in June 1835 the rates were 31 seers for wheat, 23 for gram and 42 for barley. In both years the price of a sheep is entered as eight annas. The change of values was effected gradually and resulted from various economic causes, foremost among which were the decline in the value of money and the general development of trade.'[47]

The *Kashivartaprakashika*, a Bengali fortnightly of Varanasi, published rates for different commodities sold in the city markets of

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Varanasi, Jaunpur and Mirzapur at different times of 1851. We have only taken the price lists current in Varanasi for our purpose and made a consolidated table (Table 3) on the basis of the same (placed in Appendix D). It should be also noted that the price lists were actually those current in Dinanath Gola, one of the major wholesale markets of the City.

The consolidated Table 3 is comprehensive in that it not only mentions the prices of quite a number of articles, but also the prices of the different varieties of the same article like rice, dal candy, sugar, cotton and turmeric. However, the prices of different varieties of the same article have prevented us from comparing the same with Tables 1 and 2 since these only mention a single price of an article, without any variants.

Along with the prices of different foodstuffs and cereals in Table 3, there are also prices of miscellaneous articles used for worship, manufactured goods, etc.

In a good number of cases, items mentioned in the price lists originally written in Bengali could not be translated for want of a suitable vocabulary, and in such cases the original names have been quoted as they are. In still other cases, we could not comprehend what a particular entry stands for. Moreover, in most cases the rates were given by mentioning the price per one maund or per one seer. We had to convert it in terms of the amount of an article available per one rupee to be consistent with the table of prices already quoted.

On the basis of the statistics published in the *Kashivartaprakashika* and provided in Table 3, the picture of intra-year price fluctuations of the different commodities becomes clear. It is quite obvious that the trend of such fluctuations was fairly pronounced in the cases of turmeric, powdered rice, cocoanut oil, iron rod, non-boiled rice, *arhar* dal, *sharkara* (a sort of sugar) and *patnai surti*. Of course, the nature of fluctuation differed; for example, for turmeric there was a downward price trend, while for powdered rice, the trend was upward. But the cases of downward movement were much fewer than those of upward movement. Erratic upswings and downswings were also notable for some other commodities. Intra-year fluctuations were much higher for turmeric, non-boiled rice, cocoanut oil, and sharkara; for powdered rice, dal, etc., the degree of fluctuation was much less; and for others it was found to be more even.

It needs to be pointed out here that seasonal variation of production, dependent upon the seasonal behaviour of particular agricultural crops and the consequent shortfalls or abundance in market arrival, might have

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helped cause seasonal price fluctuations of such crops in the year under review. Moreover, the creation of artificial scarcities, aggravating the problem of inadequate market arrivals, as well as inter-regional movement of goods (consequent upon the flourishing of internal trade and commerce) might have contributed to such seasonal price fluctuations. But this cannot be confirmed due to the paucity of data.

Now, juxtaposing this data for 1851 and the data covering the period 1802 to 1822 presented earlier, shows that the value of money continued to decline through time though, of course, the degree varied between different commodities.

As regards the regional price picture, it was steadier over the period from 1801 to 1822. Taking 1801 as the base year at 100.00, the index rose to 110.84 in 1802 and to 114.15 in 1822. Such a picture of inter-year price fluctuation has been projected in the form of a price chart as shown in the diagram I (placed in Appendix D). In regard to price behaviour in Varanasi in the first two decades of the nineteenth century there was a restrained fluctuation in price levels which corresponds closely with the pre-independence situation in the Indian economy at both regional and national levels. Thus, the price index from the base year increased by about 32% in 1804 and the rate slowed down somewhat in 1805 with the index at 118.12, and again it increased by about 32% in 1808 and again it decelerated in 1809 with the index at 118.27. The index again rose by about 20% in 1821 followed by deceleration in 1822 with the index at 114.15.

THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN THE ECONOMY

Let us now consider how much the advent of the British affected the economic life of the City. As a matter of fact, this study cannot be isolated from a study of the impact of the British on the Indian economy as a whole. In spite of many common features, there were, however, some local or particular characteristics which mark its distinction from the general study of the British Government and the Indian economy.

The British established law and order in the City and thus contributed to the creation of an environment conducive to the promotion of business and trade; it settled commercial feuds and levied new duties and taxes. They themselves were engaged in trade and commerce in the City, as their ultimate motive as a trading company was not political, but essentially

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commercial. The position of Commercial Resident was created in the City for dealing with British East India Company investments.[48]

The Mint was first established in Varanasi in 1730 and remained under the control of the Raja of Varanasi till 1781 when, with British occupation of the City, possession was given over to the British Resident.

Immediately after taking the reins of the administration of the City, the Government directly controlled the appointments to the key posts including the economy. Accordingly, Ambah Shankar Pandit was appointed the Master of the Benares Mint. But on being convicted of debarring the gold coin, he was removed from this post and succeeded by Munnalal.[49] Construction of a new mint building was started around 1820, the original plan having been revised by James Prinsep, the Assay Master of Benares (1820-1830). The mint, however, was transferred from the City in 1830, and the building was then frequently used as a guest house.[50]

The system of revenue stamps, introduced with Regulation 38 of 1795, levied fees on the institution of civil suits. The income thus derived was expended for all sorts of miscellaneous projects. Regular stamp duties came into vogue with Regulation 6 of 1797. This law, followed by others, and all previous laws and rules were consolidated by Regulation 10 of 1829.[51] It is quite natural that the above mentioned regulations on stamps applied to Varanasi as well. In accordance with Regulation 28 of 1795, an office was established in the City for the registration of wills and transfers or mortgages of real property upon the collection of prescribed fees.[52]

A truer picture of the Company Government's role in the economy, however, a role that proved positively destructive to Indian interests, becomes evident from a review of its economic policies. The Government's exacting tax-system, its protection and promotion of its own business interests and those of its own employees at the expense of the interests of indigenous bankers and traders, its monopoly of certain profitable trading, its control of exports, its prodigious drain of capital from India to the 'home' country and its forcing of poor *ryots* to labour for its own economic interests are but some of the circumstances responsible for the destruction of the once affluent economy of the country.

If these factors were not enough, the Indian economy was further compromised by the jealousy of certain English business sectors toward the East India Company and the high-quality and affordable-cost of the finished textile goods the Company was importing from Bengal and Varanasi, for example, into Britain. At the urging of the English textile

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industry, to cite but one instance, laws were pushed through British Parliament prohibiting the import of Indian silk and cotton goods in Britain. Under this protection and with the Company Government's failure to protect the Indian interests, this once thriving Indian industry, and one of great importance to Varanasi's economy, was devastated. This was the dawn of Britain's Industrial Revolution, and large-scale manufacturing required cheap raw materials and markets for the inexpensive finished goods factories and machines would be manufacturing. Both of these purposes were being served by British colonies like India. In fact, contrary to providing protection or innovation to India's cottage-style industries including textile industry, restraints were implemented by the Company Government and cheap, large-scale, machine-loomed products from England flooded Indian markets.[53]

GOVERNMENT REVENUE FROM INTERNAL SOURCES

It is essential for any government to collect taxes or other revenues to finance public enterprises. Information concerning how these funds were raised and the amounts collected is relevant to the present study of the economic history of the City. Though it is not possible to form a complete idea of revenue collection in the absence of relevant records, we have, fortunately, found a detailed revenue statement of the *fussilee* year of 1194 (1787-88 AD) for the City, which throws light on many questions regarding revenue collection and related issues.[54]

A Customs House had been set up in the City for collection of duties on the trade. The above mentioned revenue statement notes that some 20 Customs House stations employed 207 registered employees under the Amanut Office of Chumpat Roy, the *darogah*, for collection of revenue.

Let us first make some general observations regarding this statement of collection of revenue.

The system of tax collection was inherited by the British Government mainly from the preceding Muslim rulers of the City, since Hindu rulers had hardly made any changes in the intervening years. Revenue administration, designed with the imperialist and sectarian considerations of the Muslim rulers, was peculiarly suited to the purposes of the British imperialists who not only continued to collect the taxes already imposed but were always on the look out for the introduction of new taxes or ways to increase existing taxes. The British, however, were very careful about not offending the religious sentiments of their Hindu

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and Muslim subjects. They thought it wise not to introduce any new taxes of a religious nature but continued those that had been already introduced because of the large income derived.

The range of taxation was very broad. Practically, no economic transaction was spared from taxation. Even such work as repairing houses was subjected to taxation. Moreover, the collection of funds was not limited to imposing taxes and fees, it was also done by letting out houses and by many other means evident from the above-mentioned statement.

The religious discrimination of the Government was reflected in matters of taxation, as it imposed taxes on the construction and repairs of temples, while mosques were exempted. When a Hindu sold a camel, horse, *tattoo* (mule), bullock to another Hindu, he had to pay more tax than a Muslim selling the same to a Muslim. Again, if a lower-caste Hindu widow remarried, she had to pay a tax which was not levied on Muslims. Taxes were also imposed on Hindu pilgrims for visiting the City and installing idols.

It is also notable that even the Muslims were sometimes not spared from the brunt of taxation on religious grounds. Thus, those unfortunate Muslims who could not simply suspend the labours of their callings during the month of *Ramzan* (during the period of their fasting and prayer), were taxed. This was perhaps done as much to force Muslims to adhere to religious practices , as to raise funds by imposing penalties for violations of observances.

The rate of duty on the same items in the different markets of the City was not always the same. In Hanuman Ganj, the duty on grain to be paid by *thanias* per bullock-load was 2 paise, while the duty was 3 paise on the same in Hingua Gola. Again, there was a great variety in rates of taxation for different professions, but the basis for this is not known.

Periodicity and modes of collection of revenue were different. Thus collections were made in certain cases daily and in certain other cases monthly, each six months, yearly, and sometimes just occasionally.For instance, taxes were collected from some traders only when they set up stalls for the 'Salar Gazi' fairs at Pishach Mochan.

As far as modes were concerned, most of the duties were collected directly by the regular employees of the Amanut Office, but sometimes there were middlemen who actually raised the duty in return for payment of a fixed sum to the Government.

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Some important taxes, like an income tax introduced later in the City by Act No. 32 of 1860, were not considered for revenue collection. Nor were there taxes on houses or for water, light, sanitation and other municipal services such as police, etc. This is explained by the fact that local municipal and security services were provided by raising funds from the residents of a particular locality. When the Government tried to replace this system by introducing a House Tax in 1810, the local people revolted.

Finally, in comparison with revenues collected from other cities, revenues collected from Varanasi were probably far greater. The religious character of the City, its economic affluence, cultural richness and greater number of residents and visitors contributed to this. We do not know the details of revenue expenditures, but it seems likely that monies spent by the Government in the City were used primarily for administrative purposes.

In bringing the Government's revenue structure into focus in the fiscal administration of Varanasi, what is particularly notable is the coexistence of direct and indirect taxes. Many commodities, even items of mass consumption, were brought within the tax net. Taxes were imposed on many people engaged in different trades and professions though such taxes were not always lucrative. Very often even petty menial services were covered by direct taxes. Taxes on wealth or immovable property, under peculiar terms and conditions, were also in vogue. It was even customary to collect taxes from the activities connected with Hindu or Muslim rituals and ceremonies.

It is a fact that the tax system was devised and worked out purely for revenue-earning purposes without any regard for the canons of equity, productivity, economy, etc. Even the ability to pay criterion was grossly violated. Revenue from taxes was seldom used for the public welfare or as fiscal instruments for financing long-term economic development. It goes without saying that such taxation, fully devoid of any developmental character, virtually amounted to an economic drain of India, with British colonial interests being solely directed at maximizing imperial income.

INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND SAVINGS PATTERN OF SUBJECTS

Income

We can form a clear idea about the occupations of the residents of the City from the table of professions placed in the Appendix, but we are

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almost in the dark about the income levels of these professions, excepting but a few. We get some information on the income of some service holders employed in different establishments from the study of their payrolls.*

We may form an idea about the economic condition of a section of the people from the study of this roll *vis-à-vis* the current price index. A study of payrolls would also reveal many interesting and important data connected with the economic conditions of the time.

Now the question is whether a person was ill paid or well paid. To form an idea on this issue, we would first need to determine what a fair income was, that is, what level of income would suffice to provide a person and his family with basic needs during our period. In view of the cheaper prices of articles and the higher value of the rupee of that day (about 75% to 100% higher than in the 2000s), it may be presumed that a monthly income varying from Rs.40/- to Rs.50/- was moderate. According to a contemporary source, a monthly income of Rs.40/- was more or less sufficient to maintain a family of six to eight in a moderate way in the city of Meerut in 1851[55] and we can expect the same would be true for Varanasi. Accordingly, it may be presumed that heads of families of about six who earned monthly salaries of Rs.200/- were lavishly paid; Rs.100/- were well paid; Rs.75/- better than moderately paid; Rs.50/- moderately paid; Rs.30/- poorly paid; Rs.20/- very poorly paid; and Rs.5/- miserably paid. The women-folk, and in many cases the children, of this 'miserably paid' category also worked to augment the family income.

Now, according to this norm, the above pay scales show that menial or sub-staff, in particular, were ill paid both in private and Government establishments. Again, while the officers and teachers of Government institutions were well paid, their counterparts in private institutions were poorly paid by comparison.

The payroll data also suggest that there were great discrepancies in salaries of the employees within the same establishment. For example, while an English writer in the courts would get Rs.400/- per month, others, excepting judges, would draw Rs.50/- or less. Again, there were substantial discrepancies in pay scales of related Government establishments, such as among court, prison and police employees.

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* See temple establishment data in the Appendix of Chapter VI; educational establishment data in the Appendix of Chapter XIII; and court establishment data in the Appendix of Chapter XIX.

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It seems that the British Government had hardly any definite policy in the matter of pay initially and generally followed existing patterns in most establishments. There were some exceptions like the new establishments of the Sanskrit *Pathashala* or the Government Sanskrit College where the Government offered lucrative salaries to teachers in order to secure the services of reputed Sanskrit scholars .

It is obvious that the highest-income groups would include shroffs, business magnates, people with large land holdings and various chiefs, but without income records we cannot know what their income levels were.

Expenditures

While people with moderate incomes had to spend nearly all their earnings to satisfy basic needs, people earning better incomes could afford to spend on improving the quality and quantity of such basics as housing, food and dress, and health. Though the wants and daily necessities of life were fewer, simpler and cheaper by present day standards, there was no want of costly pastimes like music or of luxury goods like ornaments on which people would spend lavishly.

At this point, it is important to note that a portion of almost every one's income, especially of that of Hindus, was earmarked for religious purposes. While expenditures for religious purposes were meagre for those in the low-income group, affluent people spent a great deal for philanthropic and religious purposes, such as giving allowances to scholars, running alms-houses, installing idols, constructing temples and ghats, performing rituals, undertaking pilgrimages, and donating to and feeding monks, Brahmins and the poor.

The wealthy also spent considerable amounts on maintaining a good number of relatives and friends and also in keeping fairly large staffs for managing their houses and transacting business. Yet, except for the highest members of the aristocracy, the average man of wealth was never ostentatious and his personal life was rather simple and plain.

Savings

After meeting all of one's expenses , excess monies were invested and/ or reinvested in the family business, used for purchasing movable and/or immovable properties, deposited with banking houses to earn interest and/ or were kept at one's residence in the form of hard cash. It may be reasonably presumed that people usually preferred to diversify their savings.

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THE ECONOMIC CONDITION

Even with the bits and pieces of information regarding the economic condition of the people given above, there are still many things we do not know about the economic world of the City for want of records. For example, we do not know the per capita income of the people, nor do we know the percentages of rich, middle and poor classes. It appears that local trade and business, some of which had links with the religious character of the City and the mobility of pilgrims, provided a good number of professions and these consequent job opportunities opened innumerable avenues for earning an income. Key cottage industries like textiles, however, that had supported large segments of Varanasi's population of skilled and semi-skilled workers and their families were adversely affected by the imperialistic policies of the British East India Company Government. One wonders if the situation would have been much more frustrating, had Varanasi's economy not been rescued by the steady flow of currency from a constant onrush of pilgrims.

The economic condition of a large segment of local society was tolerably good. But it must be remembered at the same time that there were also people who, in spite of being wage earners, lived at the poverty line. They were mainly the menial staff of private and government establishments.

Natural calamities like droughts on the one hand, and economic exploitation by the Government on the other, were the chief reasons for the economic deprivation of a large segment of the population. It was the imperialistic policy of the British Government to hold down prices of raw materials despite increases in production costs. This was simple exploitation which helped them to suppress *ryots*. Artificial famines were also engineered enabling British planters to enroll cheap labour in India, or, later, to raise indentured labourers for their colonies in other parts of the world. According to the Gazetteer of Varanasi of 1909, famines erupted in 1783, 1813, 1819 and 1837-38 in the Varanasi district during the period under review and probably in 1803 as well.[56] Though we do not know the details of these famines, there is every possibility that these, especially the one of 1783, had adverse effects on the economic condition of the City. The famine which broke out in Patna in 1770 also adversely affected Varanasi.

On more than one occasion the Imperial Government failed to exhibit

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any scruples or humanitarian consideration in tackling these famines. In 1803, when a severe scarcity of food covered vast areas, the Government continued exporting grain by sea to foreign lands. The people, through the Press, protested vehemently against such inhumanity under the guise of 'free trade' while people were dying for want of food.[57] Ultimately the Government had to submit to the pressure of public opinion and directed all persons concerned that all grain already embarked for export on any ship or vessel in the river Hooghly or in any other ports of Bengal, whether belonging to British subjects or others, should be 'forthwith relanded'.[58] The Governor-General also directed that a 'bounty' should be paid on all grains imported into the city of Varanasi from the provinces of Bengal for three months.[59] The rates of 'bounty' paid on the different kinds of grain at stations in Varanasi[60] were for all grains, wheat and barley excepted, Rs.15/- per 100 maunds, and on wheat and barley, Rs. 17/- per 100 maunds.

It may be noted that though in other places many famine victims died of starvation, no such incidents were reported to have taken place in Varanasi.

MODERN BANKS

Though there were many private banking firms in the City, none were registered as a joint stock company. The Bank of Bengal, a joint stock company, established an agency in Varanasi in 1825, the first agent being James Prinsep, the Assay Master of Varanasi.[61] But a regular branch was not opened here till 1826, where the Government treasury balance was then kept.[62] Benares Bank began operations in1844, but the enterprise was short-lived and the bank failed in 1850.[63]

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

As we have already noted, the Government brought about many changes in the economy by reforming old rules and customs as well as through the introduction of new ones on the grounds of equity, or of better management, or for promoting its own economic and other interests. This produced four effects. Firstly, the economic administration became stronger as well as more systematic. Secondly, it opened avenues for larger income for the Government at the cost of its subjects. Thirdly, there was also the development of internal trade and commerce, resulting in greater inter-regional movement of commodities and resources, which had a

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bearing on price behaviour in the local economy. Fourthly, the once flourishing local textile industry was seriously crippled, resulting in the significant fall of exports from Varanasi.

A new class, dependent upon the Government for its income, emerged in the City from both the rich and middle classes. Most of these people were evidently pro-British and supported the Government both morally and materially and they, along with other like-minded people, became pillars of the foreign Government in this country.

The imperialistic and capitalistic nature of the British Government became increasingly manifest, however, as it unscrupulously imposed taxes on its Indian subjects on any and every pretext. This oppression did not go unnoticed and publications like the *Kashivartaprakashika* were absolutely justified in strongly criticizing the Government on a number of occasions for the adversity levied against the Indian people through the implementation of serial taxation, in addition to various other devices of exploitation.[64]

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APPENDIX - A

The First List of Bankers

The following are the bankers who certified Warren Hastings on his being impeached by the British Parliament and expressed satisfaction at his acquittal of the charges.

Arjunjee Nathojee
Adya Charan Das
Annopum Das
Anundjee Doobey
Amany Chund
Udayram
Khetsee Tiluksee
Kawn Das
Kossinath Nundram
Kowlaput Jowharry
Kishenjee
Koobeer Das
Kmun Das Permanund Das
Komun Das
Kawn Das Muthra Das
Kawn Das Ramnoon Das
Kishwar Das Radha Kishen
Kowul Nayan
Kassinaut
Kissen Das Lutchmen Das
Kirparam
Kinno Buggut
Kesso Ram
Kewul Kishen
Kocka Mul
Kerrery Mul
Koorum Das Sahoo

The Second List of Bankers

The following are the bankers who congratulated Warren Hastings on his being acquitted from charges. Some names of bankers of the first list are also found in this second list, as some may have signed both documents.

Oodhi Kurrun Das, Sheo Buksh and Kesho Das
Kishen Lal Ram Das
Gopal Das
Jadoo Roy and Mohan Lal
Daiby Sahay Misser
Doolum Das Nerotum Das
Nayan Sookhaud Laul jee
Peminarain Bholanauth
Phekoo Das
Madho Das and Narottam Das
Arjunjee Nathojee
Ady Charan Das
Annopun Das
Aunundji Doobey
Amany Chand
Udayram
Khitsee Tillueksee
Kawn Doss
Kossinath Nundram
Kowlaput Jowharry
Kishenjee
Koobeer Doss
Kumun Doss Permanund Doss
Komun Doss
Kawn Doss Muthra Doss
Kawn Doss Ramnoon Doss
Kishwar Doss Radha Kishen

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Kowul Noyan
Kossinaut
Kissen Doss Lutchmen Doss
Kirparam
Kinno Buggut
Kesso Ram
Kewul Kishen
Kocka Mul
Kurrery Mull
Koorum Doss Shaoo
Khosaul Doss Cawn Doss Bankers
Khadaror Mull
Gunga Bishen
Gunga Mull
Gunga Prasaud
Gudgeput Roy
Govind Chund
Girdhur Doss Gocul Doss
Gangaram Seo Bukht
Ganga Bishen Mahadeo
Gopaul Doss
Gopaul Doss Choudhry
Gocull Doss
Gopaul Doss
Gopaul Doss
Gahunsiam Doss Kullian Doss
Gobardhun Doss Ram Doss Bazaz
Gopaul Doss
Gida Mul
Gunsiam Doss Bazaz
Ghumundy Mull
Govind Punth Bazaz
Goverdhan Doss
Ghunsiam Doss
Ganga Persaud
Gunput
Goor Doya
Gooljarry Mull
Chumput Noth Byjonoth
Chawunny Lall Tewary
Chowdry Sookraje
Chutter Doss Bazaz
Chabul Doss
Bridge Bhowun Doss
Chutter Doss
Chunny Loll Munny Loll Bazaz
Chitto Loll
Chyne Mull
Chunder Bhan
Chutty Loll
Chubbul Doss
Jaddoo Ram Hurrysunkur
Joyram Das
Jumna Das
Jumna Doss Goburdhun Doss
Joy Curn Doss
Judgewan Doss
Jewunram Petamber Doss
Jaggo Shahoo
Jewun Doss
Jais mull Choudry Bazaz
Juggoo Sahoo
Joyram Doss
Joy Sunker Bijy Sunkur
Jummeda Doss
Jeewun Doss
Juggoo Shahoo Bazaz
Jewun Loll
Joyt Mull
Jytun Mul
Jugjiwun Doss
Takoor Doss
Tacoor Doss
Thakoor Doss Comn Doss
Deby Doss Mohun Loll
Damonder Tirboobun
Doyal Doss, relation to
Cashmery Mull
Damonder Doss
Bridge Bullub Doss
Doolum Doss
Deby Sing

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Doyal Doss
Nownid
Narainjee
Totaram Mohun Loll
Taror Mieesser
Doobey Luchmee Noth
Doyal narain
Deby Doss
Nerput Misser
Nurrotum Doss
Nirput Roy Khettry
Nundram Gopinaut
Narain Bazaz
Nurrotum Doss
Niddy Sing
Perboo Doss Gocul Doss
Pir-zanund Doss
Petteh Chund Bowanny Persaud
Petum Doss Bazaz
Perboo Doss
Punjabb Doss
Pindee Mull
Petum Doss Bridge Nundun Doss
Perboo Doss Bullob Doss
Putne Mull
Poonodur
Pokhur Mall
Bindrabun Muthra Mull
Bhuzzen Loll Jumna Doss
Bhoodhur Doobey Shahoo
Bowanny Doss Pryogwall
Bowwan Doss Suam Doss
Bhowanny Doyal
Munmohan Doss Shahoo
Munna Loll Shahoo
Mohun Doss Gocull Doss
Mohun Doss Mooturm
Mucund Seth
Munsaram Lull Chund
Mahadeo Bal Kishen
Mado Doss Nurrotum Doss
Mangly Doss
Moolraje Joota Mool
Mun Mohun Doss
Mhunt Jiwan Ram Nagur
Monick Doss Jugjiwan Doss
Madree Doss
Madru Doss Pirmanund Doss
Mohun Doss Shahoo
Metaloll Jurry Walla
Maddoajee
Mahatab Ray Mishra
Munsook Doss
Munmohur Doss Bazaz
Munnri Loll
Mungle Sein
Meher Baun Bazaz
Mohun Loll
Munnoruth Bazaz
Meta Loll
Mahtaub Sing
Moujee
Ramchund Shahoo
Raja Butihraje
Ramchand Gocul Chund
Russick Doss Gopaul Doss
Roop Chund
Ramkishen Khazanchee
Rammun Loll
Russic Loll
Ram Doss Mour
Ruggoo Naut Jumna Doss
Ramjiwan Doss
Rutton Doss Bridge Loll Doss
Ruttun Chund
Ram Doss
Rajah Ram
Radha Kishen Connoya Loll
Ram Chund Naik
Ramjus Dolputroy
Radda Mul
Rada Kishen

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Lutchme Narain
Lolljee Jonky Lall
Loll Chund
Lutchmun Doss
Loll Chund
Loll Doss Toolsy Doss
Lolljee
Lolla Ram Naut, son of Raja Cossinath Khetry
Baboo Khosaul Chand
Bowanny Doss, brother of Gopal Doss
Baboo Cawn Chund
Bawnidoss Chutter Boose Doss
Byze Nath
Byjo Noth Setul Buksh
Bijjonoth Jea
Beerbul Doss Johharry
Bridha Lochun Doss
Briidge Rutton Doss
Brijepul Doss
Boolum Doss
Beeny Doss
Bridge Bullab Doss
Beeny Dhur
Bridge Rutton Doss
Bridgeput Doss
Bridge Bullum Doss
Biennee Doss Bazaz
Bishen Naut
Bijyram
Bhuolge Ram
Buddut Sing Bazaz
Baboo Loll Kullian Doss
Bal Govind
Budleram
Bijyram
Baboo Loll Baboo Juggul Narain
Bullum Doss Tacoor Doss
Byro Noth
Bekarry Doss
Bowra Mull
Bal Govind
Sook Deo Roy Cashmerry Mull
Seoa Doss Jowhurry
Seraman Doss
Sumboo Noth
Sean Doss
Sagun Chund Pursuttom Doss
Seramun Doss
Sitaram Bazaz
Seo Sunker
Seovikram
Sehizram Selamut Roy
Sedanand
Sungum Loll
Setaram Dustory
Sitaram
Sechdeo Chund
Seopotry Mull
Seo Naut
Sitaram Handa
Hurpersaud Doobey
Hurry Jeewun Doss
Hurry Jewan Doss Joyram Doss
Hurgovind Misser
Hurry Sook

List of Gosain Merchants

Arjun Gir Gosain
Kirpaul Gir Mohant
Golaub Gir Mohant
Gian Gir Mohant
Chyton Gir Mohant
Jood Gir Mohant
Tola Gir Mohant
Ticka Gir Mohant
Thakur Gir Mohant
Dena Barty Gosain

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Nurrotum Barty Gosain
Nurrotum Barty Mohant
Tool Gir Mohant
Dowlut Gir Mohant
Deby Gir Mohant
Nirmal Gir Mohant
Picka Gir Mohant
Pertaub Gir Gosain
Pem Gir Mohant
Bhoput Gir Gosain
Bhojee Gir Gosain
Motee Gir Mohant
Ram Gir Mohant
Ram Gir Mohant
Rooderpoory Mohant
Ressaul Gir Mohant
Ramisser Gir Mohant
Raje Gir Gosain
Luckput Gir Mohant
Buckt Barty Mohant
Bukt Gir Mohant
Bissen Barty Mohant
Seo Gir Mohant
Soodesser Gir Mohant
Sooruth Gir Mohant
Soojaun Gir Mohant
Huns Gir Mohant

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APPENDIX - B

List of Professions*

	Profession	Description	Religion and/or Caste
● *Religion based*			
1a.	Dashanamis	Dandis and other Monks	Hindu
b.	Jattis (Yati)	ditto	Jain
c.	Nanakpanthis	ditto	Sikh
d.	Fakirs	ditto	Muslim
2a.	Purohits	Priests	Brahmin (Hindu)
b.	Purohits	ditto	Bhojaka (Jain)
c.	Maulavis	ditto	Muslim
3.	Ghatiyas	Attended bathers	Hindu
4.	Pandas	Attended pilgrims	Gangaputras and others
● *Education based*			
5a.	Pandits	Sanskrit and vernacular teachers	Brahmins and non-Brahmins
b.	Maulavis	Arabic, Persian, Urdu teachers	Muslims
● *Independent fortune*			
6.	Rais	Owners of moveable and immovable properties, government allowance holders	Hindus and Muslims of all castes
● *Dependent on other's income*			
7.	Khayrati	Living on charity and begging	Hindus (specially Brahmins) and Muslims
● *Military, police, vigilance and security services*			
8.	Darogah/Sipahi/ Chowkidar	Armed personnel	Hindus, especially Rajput /Brajabasi, and Muslims

* This list has been prepared on the basis of the data available from the following sources : Home Public, March-April, 1788, pp. 3701-74; *Census of Benares*, Julfiqar Ali (see Appendix A—Chapter IV); *Census of Benares*, James Prinsep (see Appendix B—Chapter IV).

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● *Trade, business, misc.*			
9.	Porters	Ganj weighers, acted between buyer and seller	Hindus & Muslims
10.	Kanta Sazan	Scale makers	Not definitely identifiable
11.	Brokers		Hindu/Khatri, Vaishya
12.	Hawkers and pealers	Attract customers (by ringing a bell)	Hindus
13.	Shroffs (merchants)	Money-lending	Brahmins
14.	Tradesmen		All castes, especially Vaishyas
15.	Gomashtas	Mercantile agents	All castes, especially Vaishyas, Brahmins
● *Misc. domestic and official services*			
16.	Bhatiyara	Servants in *sarais* (inns)	Muslims
17.	Kerani (clerks)	Various capacities—Government and private	All Hindu castes and Muslims
18.	Khidmutgar	Domestic male servants	Hindus and Muslims
19.	Noukars	Domestic servants	All castes
20.	Writer	Scribes	Kaet (Kayastha) including Bengalee and Kashmiri Brahmins
● *Cereal grain*			
21.	Burbonga (Bharabhuja)	Corn cleaners, i.e., husk separators	Muslims
22.	Bukalan Uvil (Baqqualan Awwal)	Grain shopkeepers (First class)	Hindus and Muslims
23.	Bukalan Durim (Baqqualan Doyani)	Grain shopkeepers (Second class)	ditto
● *Foodstuff/vegetables/fruits/cooking*			
24.	Tamboli	Sellers of *paan* (betel leaf)	Hindus
25.	Kanjera	Renters of mango-orchards	Hindus
26.	Kunjra	Mango importers	Hindus
27.	Kasai	Butchers of buffaloes, goats, kids, etc.	Hindus and Muslims

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28.	Hulwahe	Sellers of vegetables and keepers of grain stalls	Muslims
29.	Kunjera	Vegetable sellers	Muslims
30.	Katick (Khatik)	Vegetable and fruit sellers	Hindus
31.	Tobacco garran (garhan)	Tobacco dealers	Hindus and Muslims
32.	Halwai	Confectioners	Hindus
33.	Singhara farosh	Sellers of the thorny fruit of the water plant 'Trapa-nataus' (water chesnut)	Not definitely known
34.	Roghun zurd farosh	Ghee (Clarified butter) sellers	Hindus
35.	Missere farosh	Dealers in sugar candy	Unknown
36.	Morabba sazan	Confectioners, who used to make preserved fruits	Unknown
37.	Cheeni sazan	Powdered sugar manufacturers	Unknown
38.	Machhli farosh	Fish sellers	Hindus and Muslims
39.	Krishi	Farmers	Hindus
40.	Nanbai	Bakers and Victuallers	Muslims
41.	Mudi	Vendors of spices	Hindus
42.	Tailee	Oil manufacturers	Hindus
43.	Teli	Vendors of oil	Hindus
44.	Cooks	Employed mainly in the house of rich Brahmins and Vaishyas	Hindus
45.	Lonia	Salt makers	Shudras
● *Drinks and intoxicants*			
46.	Kalwars	Vintners of spirituous liquor	Hindus and Muslims
47.	Derbehreh farosh	The sellers or dealers of a kind of spirituous liquor, extracted principally from the flower of *Keyh* tree and used by the Muslims	Unknown

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48.	Bhang farosh	Dealers in Bhang, an intoxicant	Unknown
49.	Majion (Majoon) farosh	Dealers in *Majoon*, which was composed of the juice or oil of Bhang-leaf, mixed with sugar, opium, etc. and was of a very intoxicating nature	Unknown
50.	Tarhi farosh	Dealers in a spirituous liquor which was extracted from the fruit of the *Taal* tree (Palmeyra tree)	Unknown
51.	Charas	Sellers of Charas, an intoxicant	Unknown

- *Cloth/lace/carpet/kinkhwab/thread/cloth/silk, etc.*

52.	Dalalan abreshum	Raw silk brokers	Unknown
53.	Taw ghuran reshum	Reshum Silk thread manufacturers	Unknown
54.	Assarah farosh	Silk thread dealers	Unknown
55.	Pottuka (Patua)	Silk cord, etc. manufacturers and experts in threading pearls and other beads or pieces of ornament	Unknown
56.	Rung amezun	Silk-dyers	Unknown
57.	Chippesgar (Chhipigar)	Calico printers	Unknown
58.	Koondeegar	A class of people whose profession was to wrangle clothes and make their texture even and smooth	Muslims
59.	Nudaff	Cotton cleaners	Muslims
60.	Dhunia	Cotton spinners (carding)	Muslims
61.	Nahade	Silk weavers	Rajputs (Hindus)
62.	Julaha	All types of weavers	Muslims
63.	Soot farosh	Thread sellers	Unknown

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64.	Tarkusee wallah	Gold thread manufacturers	Unknown
65.	Kinaree wallah	Lace sellers	Rajputs (Hindus)
66.	Rangrezan	Dyers of clothes	Unknown
67.	Mahoo wallah	A class of people who used to make a red dye from the flowers of *Al* tree	Unknown
68.	Bonowl (Binaula) wallah	Cotton-seed sellers	Unknown
69.	Kali rapan (Galicha wallah)	Carpet weavers	Muslims
70.	Satrinji wallah	Makers of *Shatranji*	Muslims
71.	Chappa (Chippa) garran	Printers of gold and silver leaf on clothes, woods and etc.	Unknown
72.	Buzazan (Bajaz)	Cloth sellers	Unknown
73.	Dustoor Curga (*Kargaha*, i.e., loom)	*Kinkhwab* and gauze weavers	Hindus
74.	Khowgeer deen	Saddle-cloth makers	Unknown
75.	Cloth Wholesaling	Wholesale cloth sellers	Unknown
76.	Refiners	Refinery owners	Muslims

● *Dress, ornaments, pomposity, etc.*

77.	Lethes farosh	Manufacturers of a kind of wax-bracelet	Unknown
78.	Turkara (Turkee) farosh	Manufacturers of certain ear-rings	Unknown
79.	Tikulee farosh	Makers of a kind of silver, gold, glass ornaments, generally painted	Unknown
80.	Churhi farosh	Dealers in a kind of glass bracelets	Hindus
81.	Rakhee manufacturers	Silkman who prepared and sold *Rakhees*, a kind of wrist-ornament	Unknown
82.	Guzeeran	Washermen (Dhobi)	Hindus and Muslims
83.	Mochee	Slipper makers	Muslims

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84.	Hajjam (Nau)	Barbers	Hindus and Muslims
85.	Saleeana cheene	Dealers in glass bracelets	Unknown
86.	Darzi	Tailors	Hindus and Muslims
87.	Ruffuger (Raffugar)	Shawl darners	Hindus and Muslims
88.	Tarkchhata wallah	Umbrella makers	Muslims

● *Cosmetics and luxury goods and toys*

89.	Kasaundhan	*Atar* (scent) distillers	Hindus
90.	Rewree farosh (Roli)	Manufacturers of a certain red powder, made of turmeric etc.	Vaishyas (Hindus)
91.	Bissatean (Besati)	Seller of toys and sundry small articles	Muslims

● *Miscellaneous articles of common use*

92.	Koela wallah	Charcoal sellers	Unknown
93.	Roshnai wallah	Ink makers	Unknown
94.	Punkha sazan	*Punkha* (indigenous fan) makers	Unknown
95.	Sabun garran and sabun wallah	Soap makers and sellers	Muslims
96.	Paper merchants	Sellers of papers and almanacs	Hindus

● *Working stone/metal/mud/wood/cane/wax/ivory/leather/glass*

97.	Kassera	Copper, brass and lead smiths	Hindus
98.	Garrass	Those who cast clay moulds of a composite copper metal to make dishes, etc. on their own account and sell the same	Unknown
99.	Zarus farosh	Sellers of brass-pots, copper vessels, etc.	Unknown
100.	Kumhar	Manufacturers of earthen wire	Hindus

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101.	Zoherah	Those who made sealing wax and wax work of various kinds	Unknown
102.	Wire-drawing	Wire-drawers	Rajputs (Hindus)
103.	Mochi dokhani	Curriers (one who dresses and colours tanned leather)	Shudras (Hindus)
104.	Dharkar Narsinha wallah	Cane-workers	Shudras (Hindus)
105.	Benubanshi	Cane-workers	Shudras (Hindus)
106.	Chumar	Tanners	Hindus and Muslims
107.	Tambow (Chamboo) wallah	Makers of brass and copper pots which were generally engraved with images of Hindu Gods, and contained Ganga water for religious ceremonies	Unknown
108.	Surruff sazan	Brass and copper smiths who used to make cooking utensils	Unknown
109.	Kalabatun wallah	Golden and silver wire makers	Muslims
110.	Khatum bund	Ivory workers	Unknown
111.	Mobark band	Engravers	Muslims
112.	Kept (Koft) garran	A class of engravers & gilders who also worked in gold and silver	Unknown
113.	Hakak (Haqqaq)	Gem-lapidaires	Muslims
114.	Kraoce Karshi	Turners	Hindus and Muslims
115.	Punnee (Panni) sazan	Persons made white lead into foils	Unknown
116.	Zurganar (Sonar)	Goldsmiths	Hindus and Muslims
117.	Sikligar	Metal polishers and weapon makers	Unknown
118.	Ahungur (Lohar)	Blacksmiths	Hindus
119.	Churm farosh	Leather sellers	Unknown
120.	Sheesha farosh	Glass sellers	Unknown

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121.	Hema farosh	Wood merchants who had their shops or woodyards on the banks of the Ganga	Unknown
122.	Stone cutting	Stone cutters	Hindus and Muslims
123.	Carpentry	Carpenters	Hindus and Muslims
● *Flower based*			
124.	Gool farosh	Flower sellers	Unknown
125.	Maeda farosh	Flower sellers	Unknown
126.	Mali	Gardeners	Shudras (Hindus) and Muslims
● *Pastime and entertainment based*			
127.	Teer farosh	Arrow makers	Unknown
128.	Atishbazan	Makers of fireworks	Muslims
129.	Hindola wallah	A class of people who put up a kind of large cross for people to swing on during fairs	Unknown
130.	Duff tunan	Drum and kettle beaters. They used to beat kettles and drums and other native instruments of the kind	Muslims
131.	Patang saz	Makers of paper kites	Not identifiable
132.	Kathaks and others	Musicians, dancers and music and dancing masters	Hindus and Muslims
133.	Kasbi	Prostitutes	Hindus and Muslims
134.	Bhanrh	Comedians	Hindus and Muslims
135.	Baiji	Dancing women	Hindus and Muslims
● *Reptiles/birds/animal based*			
136.	Roz farosh	Goat and kid dealers	Unknown
137.	Chabuksawar	Horse-breakers and grooms	Hindus and Muslims
138.	Madari	Snake catchers and charmers	Muslims
139.	Poulterers and fowlers		Hindus and Muslims

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140.	Ahirs	Cowherds	Hindus
141.	Gadaria	Shepherds	Shudras (Hindus)
● *Transport and Communication based*			
142.	Majhees and Dandis	Boatmen	Hindus
143.	Elephant, camel and hackney driving	Elephant, camel and hackney drivers	Hindus and Muslims
144.	Kahars	Bearers	Shudras (Hindus)
● *House-construction based*			
145.	Chuna farosh	Lime sellers. Also lime burners	Hindus and Muslims
146.	Kusser farosh	Tile makers	Unknown
147.	Masymaran (Raj)	Mason and bricklayers	Hindus and Muslims
148.	Khest suzan Intapaz/Kumar Gadha wallah	Brick makers	Hindus and Muslims
149.	Lonia	Builders of mud-walls	Shudras (Hindus)
150.	Sirki wallah	Thatchers	Shudras (Hindus)
● *Medical based*			
151.	Vaidya (Hakim)	Physicians	Hindus and Muslims
152.	Sathia (derived from Swastik), a holy symbol	Surgeons and occultists	Shudras (Hindus)
153.	Domes	Corpse dressers and sweepers	Hindus and Muslims
154.	Washing of dead bodies	Washers of dead bodies	Hindus
● *Miscellaneous fields*			
155.	Purchasers of sweepings	Persons who either bought or obtained by some other arrangements, the sweepings of the mint office, and banks and banking shops, in which sometimes gold and silver particles were found	Muslims

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156.	Hijrah	Eunuchs : they used to take fees at births and celebrations like marriages	Muslims
157.	Bhisti	Water carriers	Muslims
158.	Chobdars	Mace bearers and gatekeepers	Hindus and Muslims
159.	Mussalchees	Torch bearers	Hindus and Muslims
160.	Bari	Link-boys	Shudras (Hindus)
161.	Chylodar		Muslims
162.	Halalkhor	Scavengers	Muslims

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APPENDIX - C

List of Market-places*

Sadar Chubootara Ward—13 markets

Raja ka Darwaja	Market of baskets.
Thatheri Bazar	Hardware market where utensils made of brass, bronze and copper were sold.
Machher Hatta	Fish market. Shops of other articles were also here.
Resham Katra	Shops of silk.
Soondia Mahalla	A colony of the distillers of country liquor, which most probably, was also sold here.
Kachouri Gali	Shops of sweetmeats.
Koonj Gali	Cloth market.
Mandi Jadhoo	
Houz Katra	
Sakarkand Gali	
Ally Ganj	
Nuckir Ulla Khan Katra	
Dal ki Mandi	Shops of different types of commodities.

Dashashwamedh Ward—6 markets

Balmukund Chowhatta	
Seewin Chowhatta	
Dashashwamedh	A market-place was situated near the ghat.
Bangali Tola	A market-place was situated in this locality near the Kedareshwar Temple, which was visited mainly by the Bengalees.
Man Sarovar	
Tarkari Bazar	A market-place of green vegetables.

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* This list has been prepared on the basis of the data available from the following sources: Jadunath Sarvadhikari—*Tirthabhraman* (pp. 453-55); Harriette Ashmore—*Narrative of a three months' March in India and a Residence in the Dooab; Statement of Chowkies*, March to April, 1785; *Census of Benares*, James Prinsep.

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Bhahironath Ward—8 markets

Beebee Hatia

Bhara Mall Katra

Naick (Nayak) Bazar

Baolee Bheeke Roy Bazar

Dadooji Chowk

Shesh Mohun Bazar

Rajmandir Bazar

Kazimandi Ward—4 markets

Kazi Mandi

Umbiya Mandi — Market-place of mangoes. It is also known as Umbah Satti. There were such shops at different places as Mudhia ghat, Deuriabir.

Azizan Mundi

Chikh Tola — A colony of butchers, where meat was sold.

Telianala Ward—6 markets

Rajghat Bazar

Bhagut Ganj

Lall Khan Bazar

Chouhatta Bazar

Dara Shikoh Katra

Trilochan Ganj — Corn market. Large shops of rice, salt, and other articles were situated here.

Chowkhambha Ward—3 markets

Chowkhamba — Mainly a market-place of green vegetables, other things like good quality tobacco were also available here.

Mokim Ganj

Soot Tola — Yarn market.

Gheehatta Ward—7 markets

Gheehatta — Market-place of *ghee* or clarified butter.

Paan Dariba (chhota) — Small wholesale market of betel leaves.

Paan Dariba (Baḍa) — Large wholesale market of betel leaves.

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Aurangabad Ganj	Mainly a wholesale market of various commodities like ghee, *jagri* prepared from palm and molasses juice, spices, wood for house-beams, bamboos, oil, gauze cloth, cow-skin, country salt, different kinds of fruits and flowers yielding a red dye.
Nakhas (Aurangabad)	It was a market-place of animals like horses, tattoos, camels, and bullocks.
Garrain Tola	This was a colony of the makers of metal dishes, etc., who most probably sold the articles from here.
Kassab Tola	Colony of butchers who sold meat from here.

Chetganj Ward—5 markets

Nakhas (Chetganj)	Another market-place of animals.
Dinanath Gola	A wholesale market-place of grocery. The following commodities were sold here : ghee, brown coloured sugar, powdered sugar, *kundseah* jaggery, turmeric, *sawti* (a drug), oil, a liquid kind of jaggery, country salt.
Chet Ganj	A wholesale market-place of grocery, especially of oil, grains, mustard,a grain whence oil is extracted. Varities of pulses were also available here.
Omrao Singh Bazar	
Alut Singh Bazar	

Shewala Ward—8 markets

Shewala Bazar	
Hingua Gola	A wholesale market of grains. The following articles were also sold: powdered sugar, brown coloured sugar, kundseah (jaggery, salt, *jeupie*), *chob durun* (wood for bearers), bamboo, etc.
Hanuman Ganj	A wholesale market-place of the following articles : grain, mustard seed, jeupie, oil.
Kinaram Bazar	
Dulzeet Singh Bazar	
Sarnam Singh Bazar	

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Hatta Kalwaran	Liquor was sold here.

Durgakunda Ward—2 markets

Nababganj (Durgakund)

Cashmeery Ganj

Rampura Ward—3 markets

Bag Kamakhya Bazar

Sadanand Bazar

Deoreabir Bazar	It was mainly a wholesale market-place of mango and jackfruit.

Jagatganj Ward—2 markets

Jagat Ganj

Kerany Ganj	A grocery market.

Aliapura Ward—1 market

Ausan Ganj

Sarayheat Ward—1 market

Jallaly Patty

Seray Surjun Ganj	Its name has been found only in the Statement of Chowkies of 1788. Probably, it was situated at the outskirts of the City. It was a wholesale market-place of powdered and brown coloured sugar, grain, kundseah (jaggery), jeupie, ghee, lamp-oil.

Raja Bazar

The names of the following market-places have been identified from Prinsep's Census of 1829 and other records.

Abkari Hatta	It may be identical with Hatta Kalwaran.
Anaj Mandi	A market-place of vegetables.
Badshah Ganj	Various kinds of foodstuff were available here.

Dalep Ganj

Govind Das Katra

Gouri Ganj

Grant Bazar

Hyder Ganj

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Hugul Ganj (in Secrole)	
Khojwa Serai Ganj	A wholesale market of grain, mustard seeds, *kapas* (cotton with its seeds) and ginger.
Koila Bazar	Market-place of charcoal.
Kanhya Lal Bazar	
Lakhi Chabutra (near Chowk)	
Maulavi Bazar	
Nawab Ganj (between Durga Kund and Kamachchha)	
Sadar Bazar (in Secrole)	
Khajuree (in Secrole)	The traders used to purchase grains here, brought by the cultivators. Articles were sold here not by the standard of the weight of *maund* and *seer* but by *dandi*, i.e., the weight of *bajra*, a basket used for carrying vegetables.
Bishweshwar Ganj	A wholesale market-place of green and sweetmeats.
Barhabazar	Shops of confectioners, tailors, etc.
Jauharipatti	A market-place of jewels (in Chowkhamba).
Secander Ganj	A market-place of wheat, barley, mustard, linseed, etc.
Gandhi Katra	A market-place of scent.
Duncan Ganj	A wholesale market-place of grain.

Appendix - D

TABLE - 1

A. Articles and Quantities Sold for One Rupee in Varanasi City (1802-1822)

Article	1802		1803		1804		1805		1806		1807		1808		1809		1810		1811		1812	
	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr
Wheat	1	0	1	5	0	35	1	5	0	32.5	1	5	0	36	0	32.5	0	26	0	29	0	30
Dal	0	25	0	37.5	0	27	0	30	0	37.5	0	37.5	1	0	0	28	0	15	0	26	0	26
Barley	1	15	1	17.5	1	0	1	10	1	10	1	25	1	5	1	0	0	30	0	35	1	15
Paddy	1	20	1	5	1	0	1	11.25	1	0	1	15	1	7.5	0	35	1	0	1	5	1	0
Bootgram	1	12.5	1	16.25	1	2.5	1	1.25	0	33.75	1	17.5	0	15	1	0	0	32.5	0	35	1	1.25
Kodo	2	0	2	0	1	10	1	5	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	10	1	0	1	10	1	10
Jawar	1	12.5	1	22.5	1	5	0	36	1	10	1	12.5	1	15	0	31.25	0	35	1	5	1	5
Bajra	1	0	1	0	0	35	0	35	1	0	1	10	0	35	0	32.5	0	4	0	28	0	35
Merwa	1	25	1	30	1	10	1	15	1	20	1	30	1	25	1	20	0	35	1	5	1	15
Jagri	0	22	2	23	0	16	0	19	0	22	0	16	0	12	0	20	0	19	0	21	0	22
Oil	0	9	0	6.5	0	5	0	10	0	9	0	11	0	7.5	0	9.5	0	5.25	0	4	0	5
Ghee	0	3.25	0	2.75	0	2.33	0	2.5	0	3	0	2.25	0	3	0	2.5	0	2.75	0	2.25	0	2

B. Price in Rupees of the Articles per Maund in Varanasi City (1802-1822)

Article	1802	1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812
Wheat	1.00	0.89	1.14	0.89	1.23	0.89	1.11	1.23	1.54	1.38	1.33
Dal	1.60	1.07	1.48	1.33	1.07	1.07	1.00	1.43	2.67	1.54	1.54
Barley	0.73	0.70	1.00	0.80	0.80	0.62	0.89	1.00	1.33	1.14	0.73
Paddy	0.67	0.89	1.00	0.78	1.00	0.73	0.84	1.14	1.00	0.89	1.00
Bootgram	0.76	0.71	0.95	0.97	1.19	0.70	2.67	1.00	1.23	1.14	0.97
Koda	0.50	0.50	0.80	0.89	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.80	1.00	0.80	0.80
Jawar	0.76	0.64	0.89	1.11	0.80	0.76	0.73	1.28	1.14	0.89	0.89
Bajra	1.00	1.00	1.14	1.14	1.00	0.80	1.14	1.23	10.00	1.43	1.14
Merwa	0.62	0.57	0.80	0.73	0.67	0.57	0.62	0.62	1.14	0.89	0.73
Jagri	1.82	0.39	2.50	2.11	1.82	2.50	3.33	2.00	2.11	1.90	1.82
Oil	4.44	6.15	8.00	4.00	4.44	3.64	5.33	4.21	7.62	10.00	8.00
Ghee	12.31	14.55	17.17	16.00	13.33	17.77	13.33	16.00	14.55	17.77	20.00
TOTAL	26.21	28.06	36.87	30.75	28.35	30.55	31.49	31.94	45.33	39.77	38.95
Year	1802	1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812
Price Index	100.00	107.058375	140.6715	117.321633	108.164823	116.55857	120.14498	121.86188	172.94926	151.73598	126.66667

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TABLE - 1 (Contd.)

A. Articles and Quantities Sold for One Rupee in Varanasi City (1802-1822)

Article	1813		1814		1815		1816		1817		1818		1819		1820		1821		1822	
	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr	md	sr
Wheat	0	35	0	32	1	5	1	10	0	33.75	0	17	0	19	0	30	0	35	0	35
Dal	0	32.5	0	35	0	32.5	1	2.5	0	35	0	16.5	0	15	0	28	0	37.5	1	0
Barley	1	10	1	6.5	1	20	1	27.5	1	12	0	28	0	28	1	0	1	20	1	20
Paddy	1	18	1	0	1	10	1	25	1	0	0	24	1	0	1	0	1	10	1	2.5
Bootgram	1	7.5	1	2.5	1	15	1	5	1	5	0	25	0	25	0	31.25	1	12.5	1	12.5
Kodo	1	20	1	30	2	0	2	5	1	20	0	35	1	0	1	20	2	10	2	0
Jawar	1	0	1	7.5	1	20	1	35	1	5	0	22	0	35	0	32.5	1	20	2	0
Bajra	0	35	0	36.25	1	5	1	20	0	35	0	20	0	21	1	0	1	5	1	5
Merwa	1	25	1	20	1	32.5	1	37.5	1	15	0	35	0	35	1	12.5	2	0	1	35
Jagri	0	18	0	18	0	17	0	20	0	15	0	10	0	15	0	10	0	15	0	15.5
Oil	0	8	0	7	0	8.25	0	8.25	0	4.5	0	3.5	0	4	0	5.5	0	5	0	4.5
Ghee	0	2.5	0	2.5	0	2.75	0	2.5	0	1.75	0	1.75	0	2.5	0	2.25	0	1.75	0	1.8125

B. Price in Rupees of the Articles per Maund in Varanasi City (1802-1822)

Article	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822
Wheat	1.14	1.25	0.89	0.80	1.19	2.35	2.11	1.33	1.14	1.14
Dal	1.23	1.14	1.23	0.94	1.14	2.42	2.67	1.43	2.07	1.00
Barley	0.80	0.86	0.67	0.59	0.77	1.43	1.43	1.00	0.67	0.67
Paddy	0.69	1.00	0.80	0.62	1.00	1.67	1.00	1.00	0.80	0.95
Bootgram	0.84	0.94	0.73	0.89	0.89	1.60	1.60	1.28	0.76	0.76
Koda	0.67	0.57	0.50	0.47	0.67	1.14	1.00	0.67	0.44	0.50
Jawar	1.00	0.84	0.67	0.53	0.89	1.82	1.14	1.23	0.67	0.50
Bajra	1.14	1.10	0.89	0.67	1.14	2.00	1.90	1.00	0.89	0.89
Merwa	0.62	0.67	0.55	0.52	0.73	1.14	1.14	0.67	0.50	0.53
Jagri	2.22	2.22	2.35	2.00	2.67	4.00	2.67	4.00	2.67	2.58
Oil	5.00	5.71	4.85	4.85	8.89	11.43	10.00	7.27	8.00	8.89
Ghee	16.00	16.00	14.55	16.00	22.86	22.86	16.00	17.77	22.86	22.07
TOTAL	38.95	31.35	32.3	28.68	28.88	42.84	53.86	42.66	38.65	41.47
Year	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822
Price Index	148.607402	119.6108356	123.2354063	109.423884	110.1869515	163.4490652	205.4940862	162.7623045	147.4628005	158.2220527

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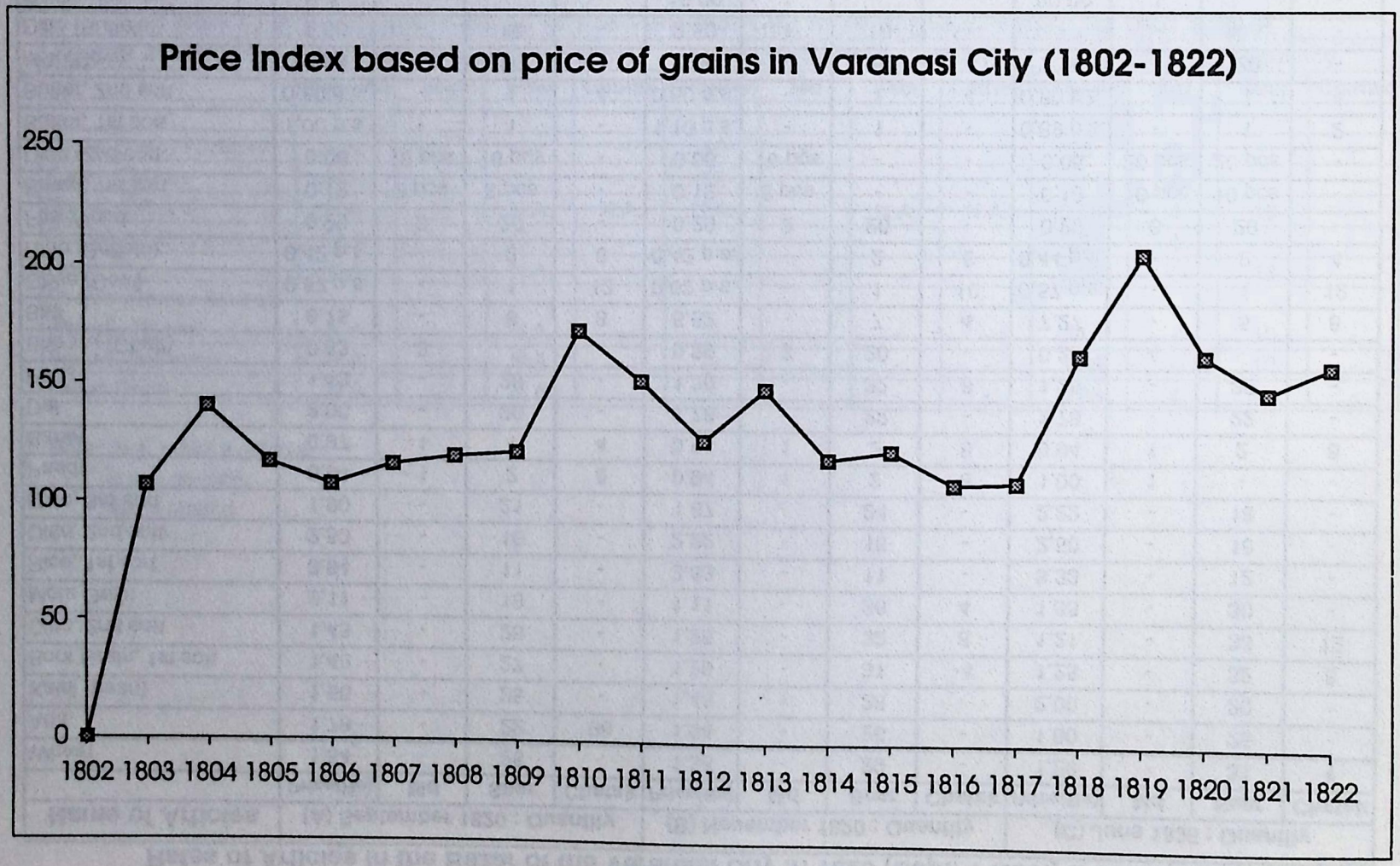

TABLE -2

Rates of Articles in the Bazar of the Varanasi City in 1820 (Sept. + Nov.) & 1835 (June)

Name of Articles	(A) September 1820 : Quantity				(B) November 1820 : Quantity				(C) June 1835 : Quantity			
	Price(Rs)	Md	Seer	Chatak	Price(Rs)	Md	Seer	Chatak	Price(Rs)	Md	Seer	Chatak
Wheat	1.54	-	26	-	1.38	-	29	-	1.29	-	31	4
Atta	1.78	-	22	98	1.54	-	26	-	1.60	-	25	-
Kalai (bean)	1.60	-	25	-	1.43	-	28	-	2.00	-	20	-
Boot Grain, 1st sort	1.48	-	27	-	1.29	-	31	-4	1.25	-	32	8
Ditto, 2nd sort	1.43	-	28	-	1.25	-	32	8	1.21	-	33	12
Mota Grain	2.11	-	19	-	1.11	-	36	4	1.33	-	30	-
Rice, 1st sort	3.64	-	11	-	3.63	-	11	-	3.33	-	12	-
Ditto, 2nd sort	2.50	-	16	-	2.22	-	18	-	2.50	-	16	-
Ditto, 3rd sort	1.90	-	21	-	1.67	-	24	-	2.22	-	18	-
Paddy	0.94	1	2	8	0.94	1	2	8	1.00	1	-	-
Barley	0.97	1	1	4	0.94	1	2	8	0.94	1	2	8
Dal	2.00	-	20	-	1.78	-	22	-	1.78	-	22	-
Peas	1.43	-	28	-	1.30	-	32	8	1.25	-	32	-
Bhoosa (Chaff)	0.33	3	-	-	0.29	3	20	-	0.25	4	-	-
Salt	6.15	-	6	8	5.52	-	7	4	7.27	-	5	8
Ghee (Cow)	0,57 p.s.	-	1	12	0,62 p.s.	-	1	10	0,57 p.s.	-	1	12
Ditto (Buffalo)	0,42 p.s.	-	2	6	0,42 p.s.	-	2	6	0,44 p.s.	-	2	4
Fire Wood	0.29	3	20	-	0.29	3	20	-	0.29	3	20	-
Bread, 1st sort	0.12	8 pcs	8 pcs	-	0.12	8 pcs	-	-	0.10	10 pcs	10 pcs	-
Ditto, 2nd sort	0.06	16 pcs	16 pcs	-	0.06	16 pcs	-	-	0.05	20 pcs	20 pcs	-
Butter, 1st sort	1,00 p.s.	-	1	-	1,10 p.s.	-	1	-	0,89 p.s.	-	1	2
Butter, 2nd sort	0,80 p.s.	-	1	4	0,80 p.s.	-	1	4	0,80 p.s.	-	1	4
Milk (Cow)	2.00	-	20	-	2.00	-	20	-	2.00	-	20	-
Ditto (Buffelo)	2.50	-	16	-	2.50	-	16	-	-	-	N.A.	-
Oil Cocoanuts	N.A.	-	-	-	15.00	1	-	-	20.00	1	-	-
Oil Mustard	0,20 p.s.	-	5	-	0,20 p.s.	-	5	-	0,17 p.s.	-	6	6

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TABLE -2

(Contd.)

Rates of Articles in the Bazar of the Varanasi City in 1820 (Sept. + Nov.) & 1835 (June)

Name of Articles	(A) September 1820 : Quantity				(B) November 1820 : Quantity				(C) June 1835 : Quantity			
	Price(Rs)	Md	Seer	Chatak	Price(Rs)	Md	Seer	Chatak	Price(Rs)	Md	Seer	Chatak
Sugar, Candy (Country)	N.A.	-	-	-	36	-	-	-	28	1	-	-
Sugar, Chenee	N.A.	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	11	1	-	-
Bhoosa (Mixed)	N.A.	-	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	-	N.A.	N.A.	0.29	4	10	-
Fire Wood, 2nd sort	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	-	-	-	-	0.25	4	-	-
Flour	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	-	-	-	-	2.22	-	18	-
Soojee (Coarse flour of Wheat), 1st sort	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	10	-
Soojee, 2nd sort	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	-	-	-	-	3.33	-	12	-
Green Grass	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	-	-	-	-	0.25	4	-	-

Note : N.A. = Not available
p.s. = per seer
Md = Maund

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TABLE -3

Intra-year Fluctuations in 1851 : Base Value One Rupee

Articles	15 July			15 August			15 September			30 November		
	Md	Seer	Chatak	Md	Seer	Chatak	Md	Seer	Chatak	Md	Seer	Chatak
Candy--Agra	-	3	10.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Do -- Rajpur	-	3	7.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Do -- Kanpee	-	3	10.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Do -- Banda	-	3	7.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sugar (Pakka)	-	5	-	-	5	-	-	4	9	-	5	-
Do (Kachcha)	-	5	11.4	-	5	11.4	-	7	4.3	-	6	10.6
Molasses	-	13	5.3	-	12	13	-	13	5.3	-	13	5.3
Ghee	-	2	8	-	2	4	-	2	4	-	2	13
Turmeric--North	-	13	5.3	-	-	-	-	14	8	-	16	-
Do -- Calcutta	-	17	12.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-
Betel-Nut (Imported)	-	5	-	-	5	-	-	4	9	-	5	-
Do (Manikchandi)	-	5	-									
White Sandal-wood	-	2	8	-	-	-	-	2	8	-	2	-
Camphor	-	-	10.6	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sulphur	-	-	6.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Powdered rice	-	3	5.3	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	2	13
Ammonium Chloride	-	2	5.6	-	-	-	-	2	5.6	-	2	2
Wax	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	1	3
Candle	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	12
Mercury	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Resin	-	6	10.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	10.6
Cocoanut Oil, Calcutta	-	3	10.1	-	-	-	-	3	5	-	2	13
Do -- another variety	-	5	11.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Zinc	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	4	13	-	-	-
Tin	-	1	1.2	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-
Lead	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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TABLE -3

(Contd.)

Intra-year Fluctuations in 1851 : Base Value One Rupee

Articles	15 July			15 August			15 September			30 November		
	Md	Seer	Chatak	Md	Seer	Chatak	Md	Seer	Chatak	Md	Seer	Chatak
Iron Sheet	-	6	6.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iron Rod	-	7	4.3	-	-	-	-	8	22	-	-	-
Copper Sheet	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bottle	30 (approx) pcs. in Re 1.											
Cocoanut	25 pcs. in Re 1.											
Non-boiled Rice (fine)	-	20	-	-	21	-	-	18	-	-	-	-
Boiled Rice (coarse)	-	25	-	-	26	-	-	24	-	-	-	-
Non-boiled Basmati	-	13	5.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boiled Rice (fine)	-	26	-	-	26	-	-	26	-	-	-	-
Boiled Rice (coarse)*	-	27	-	-	27	-	-	29	-	-	-	-
Boiled Rice(very small)	-	29.5	-	-	30	-	-					
Arhar Dal (a sort of pulse of bean)	-	33.75	-	-	5	-	-	36	-	-	-	-
Mug Dal (a sort of pulse of bean)	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	35	-	-	-	-
Barley	1	-	-									
Wheaten flour	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Castor	-	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sakkar(a kind of sugar)	-	13	5.3	-	12	11.4	-	8	14.2	-	8	-
Surti (Patnai)	-	8	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	11	6
Mustard seed	-	30	-	-	31	-	-	30	-	-	-	-
Linseed	-	27	8	-	28	-	-	26	-	-	-	-

* 2nd variety

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Paper marked 'D'—an address sent by the noupatty bankers and merchants and others in appreciation of Warren Hastings during his impeachment. Home Dept. (Public) Consultation, August 1, 1788; a petition from the bankers of the City enclosed in the letter from the British Agent at Benares to Barlow, Sect. to the Govt. Judicial (Civil) Proceeding No. 5/4 May 1782, Vol. 43, pp. 6-20.
2. Translation of an address from several inhabitants of Benares to Warren Hastings, COV., Residency Records, Basta 1, Book No. 1, Sl No. 130, pp. 110-15; Home Dept. (Public) Cons., August 1, 1788. Address marked 'D' made by the noupatti bankers and merchants.
3. *Ibid.*
4. COV., Duncan Records, No. 4, Sl No. 24, May 1789.
5. Foreign Miscellaneous, Vol. 12, 1790, Part I, pp. 19-22, 25.
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17. Captain Thorsby's proposal for college reform in July 1825: George Nicholls, *Sketch on the Rise and Progress of the Benares Sanskrit College*, p. 56, U.P. Govt. press.
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21. Resident to the Assist. to the Resident, 14 Nov. 1784, COV., Misc. Letter Series I, Vol. 6A, p. 191.
22. Judicial (Civil) Proceedings No. 5, 4 May 1798, Vol. 42, pp. 6-20.
23. *Ibid.*, Proceedings No.7, 4 May 1798, pp. 24-25.
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25. For further details on the Rais, see Chapter XVIII.

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29. *Ibid.*
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40. Ashmore, *Narrative of a Three Month's March* etc., p. 188.
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42. *Statement of Chowkies*, Home Public, March-April, 1788.
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45. Vide Chapter XIX.
46. Vide Tables in the Appendix of this Chapter.
47. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, pp. 49-50.
48. W. Hamilton, *Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindustan and the Adjacent Countries*, p. 37.
49. COV., Miscellaneous Letter Series, Basta No. 44, Vol. 6A, pp. 227-28, 24 June, 1785.
50. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, p. 163.
51. *Ibid.*
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53. Majumdar R. C. and others, *An Advanced History of India*, 3rd Edition, pp. 799-805; Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 37-38.
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55. *Kashivartaprakashika*, 15 November, 1851.
56. *Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary*, Sep. 27, 1803. Proclamation of the Governor-General-in-Council. Selections from *Calcutta Gazette*, 1798-1805, Vol. III, pp. 136-37; William Carey, *The Good Old Days of Honourable John Company*, Vol. 1.
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. Nevill, *Benares: A Gazetteer*, pp. 53-55.
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CHAPTER X

TOWARDS A MODERN MUNICIPALITY

SELF-GOVERNMENT—A FAMILIAR CONCEPT

Local self-government was a familiar concept in ancient Indian civilization and was practised in both villages and towns 'to a far greater extent than anywhere else in the world'.* In the Medieval Age, though this tradition was not totally lost, it surely suffered a set back when administrative power, of urban areas especially, was concentrated in the hands of an officer, called the *Kotwal*, appointed by the Muslim rulers.** The tradition further dwindled during the turmoil that followed the dissolution of the Mughal Empire. Creditably enough, despite these developments, Varanasi retained much of this old, democratic tradition of self-government, though at a micro level, and that, too, in a fragmented way. This truth will become self-evident from the study in the pages that follow.

BACKGROUND OF THE PHATAKBANDI SYSTEM

Though walls and gates on the boundaries of cities were common in ancient and mediaeval cities around the world, the *phataks* (gates) of Varanasi, that divided its zones from one another, were rather uncommon in other cities.[1] It is almost impossible to ascertain when, how and why these phataks emerged in Varanasi. One may, however, presume that these phataks sprang up in the Medieval Age when the lives and property of the Hindu citizens and pilgrims were at stake because of periodic Muslim invasions; attacks by Muslim rulers on Hindu places of worship; forced conversions of Hindus to Islam; the failure of the local administration to establish law and order; and the consequent free hand of antisocial elements in the City. These exigencies for self-protection on the one hand, and a trend towards the growth of districts of a homogeneous character

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* R. C. Majumdar and others, ed., *An Advanced History of India*, p.853, 3rd edition.

** For details, see Debidas Nanda—*Municipal Administration in India* (with special reference to Varanasi), p.8, Varanasi, 1998.

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with respect to province, profession, caste, etc., and the age-old tradition of self-government alluded to above on the other, most likely caused the growth of the *Phatakbandi System* of Varanasi. While there is no record of phataks in ancient Varanasi, there are records of numerous phataks here by the end of Muslim rule.[2]

PHATAKBANDI AT THE START OF BRITISH RULE

The earliest Government records show that in 1781 there were two categories of phataks.[3] The first category listed those that remained under the sole custody of the inhabitants who would open and close them at will (data on the total number of these could not be ascertained). Phataks in the second category were under the charge of private watchmen and totalled 94 at that time. It is evident that where there were no watchmen, security was not as reliable. With the passage of time, laxity in appointing and paying these watchmen regularly resulted in widespread robbery and theft in the City towards the end of the nineteenth century.

It was against this backdrop that Grant took charge of the Magistrate's office and immediately started enquiries into the matter. His investigation into the number, efficiency and wages of the watchmen reveals:

> '... hardly any (guards) were employed, that particular individuals had at first neglected to pay their quota, that the rest had gradually relieved themselves in the same way, and that ultimately there had been neither contributions nor guards.'

This induced Grant to summon the residents of the wards in which crimes were committed and to fix a period for the appointment of watchmen with proper wages. The wisdom of the measure was admitted by all and each declared his willingness to contribute according to his means. Hence the owners of stone-chouks (houses), brick-chouks and mud-chouks were to contribute monthly 3 annas, 2 annas and 2 pice respectively.[4]

Under Grant, there came to be two types of phataks; the first type of phataks was guarded by watchmen paid by the inhabitants through agents appointed by them. An exemption from the general contribution for watchmen was, however, granted in favour of religious orders under Government sanction. The second type of phataks was guarded by watchmen appointed by the Magistrate. These watchmen were paid by a cess (tax) levied on the inhabitants through the Kotwal (chief police officer) in cases where the inhabitants failed to appoint and pay their watchmen as prescribed in Section 28 Regulation 17 of 1795.

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PHATAKBANDI REGENERATED

In 1809, E. Watson, Grant's successor, confessed that there were still some wards where the Phatakbandi System had not been introduced by the Magistrate for want of adequate time.[5] On average, most of the *mahallas* had one to three phataks with one watchman each. The number of phataks and their watchmen rose to between five and nine and in certain cases, for instance in the Hata Bhulotan and August Kunda Mahallas, there were as many as 10 and 15 phataks respectively.[6] Consequently, in the *Kotwali* (Police Headquarters of the City), the post of *Darogah* of Phatakbandi was created to look after the entire system.

The most beneficial effect of the regeneration of the Phatakbandi System was that not a single instance of robbery was reported to have occurred after Watson took office and that even a petty theft scarcely ever escaped detection. The duties of the watchmen consisted in closing the gates generally at 10 o'clock in the night,* guarding the entrances, and in giving immediate intelligence regarding any occurrences in their respective wards that might fall under the cognizance of the police.[7] The Magistrate observes the following regarding the funding and the workings of the Phatakbandi System :

> 'The mode in which the assessment has been fixed and collected is the best which could possibly be devised—it is more acceptable to the people and less invidious than any other because the appropriation of the fund contributed for the general protection is vested in a man of their own choice and the Magistrate's interference is restricted to the simple object of affording him the requisite support and compelling payment of the fixed allowance where his own exertions fail. The duties are well performed because the persons employed are liberally paid and the Fatakbandi Plan affords the most accurate means of information in the most unexceptionable mode.'

The Magistrate also notes:

> 'The greatest security is afforded to property from the fatakbandi system and the regular police gain an accession of strength which is highly useful to the interests of government.'

But this achievement was short-lived and, moreover, though the Phatakbandi System became instrumental in maintaining law and order in the inner zone, the fact that the City always had serious problems controlling crimes in general is evident from our study of law and order in Varanasi during this period.

PHATAKBANDI ASSESSMENT

A detailed statement of the existing assessment for Phatakbandi during

* Enugula Veeraswamy, *Kashiyatra Charitra*, p. 106.

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1809 shows that the monthly contribution from 133 mahallas amounted to Rs. 1264-7-10.

From this fund, 381 guards for 381 phataks were paid. Monthly wages of the guards amounted to Rs. 1198-13-x. The surplus of Rs. 65-10-10 was appropriated for repairs to the phataks.[8] A table showing details of this assessment with the number of phataks, etc., has been placed in the Appendix.

PHATAKBANDI IN THE EYES OF TRAVELLERS

The Phatakbandi System, which evolved as a unique institution of the citizens of Varanasi, attracted the notice of distinguished foreign visitors like Bishop Heber who observes:

> 'The City of Benares is certainly the richest as well as probably the most populous in India; it is also the best governed in respect to its police (work) which is carried on by sort of national guard. The *chuprassies* of whom I have made frequent mention are chosen by the inhabitants themselves and merely approved by the magistrate. There are about 500 of these in the City, which is divided into 60 wards, with a gate to each which is shut at night and guarded by one of these people. In consequence, notwithstanding the vast population, the crowds of beggars and pilgrims of all countries ... robberies and murders are very rare, while the guards being elected and paid by the respectable householders have an interest in being civil, well-balanced and attentive.'[9]

It should be mentioned with regard to this observation that the guards were, in fact, selected and not elected as Heber contends.

WORKING AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PHATAKBANDI

When the Government contemplated introducing the *Chowkeedaree System* under Regulation XXII of 1826 and Act XV of 1837 by replacing the Phatakbandi System, R. Davidson, Acting Magistrate of Varanasi, strongly advocated retaining the Phatakbandi System. He wrote on this occasion to E. P. Smith, Commissioner of Circuit 5 Division, Ghazipur, on June 8, 1840:

> 'Mr. Morrison (Davidson's predecessor) has so fully explained the manner pursued in appointing Fatukbundees and watchmen in Benares in his letter that it appears unnecessary for me to enter on the subject except so far as to express my opinion that were it not for the charm that surrounds the name of Jury to English feelings—the present system as it exists in Benares is in reality as efficient and even as liberal if not more so in its constitution than the Panchayet appointed under Regulation XII of 1816.'[10]

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PHATAKBANDI *vis-à-vis* CITIZENS

The idea of self-administration, which worked behind the Phatakbandi System with regard to law and order, also worked with regard to some essential services like maintaining the cleanliness of the City. The inhabitants of a given mahalla, who took responsibility for keeping their mahalla clean, raised funds through public contributions, appointed labourers or offered personal service. Only on rare occasions did the local authority have to interfere in their work, such as settling some dispute over related matters. The local authority's communications with the Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor in Agra in 1837[11] giving important and necessary information regarding the roles of the citizens themselves in these matters may be summarized as follows:

Works, such as preserving the cleanliness of the streets, making or repairing drains and other such activities, were done either by the voluntary contributions and exertions of the inhabitants of some particular mahalla or by the Magistrate, obliging them to take their share in what was meant for their own benefit, giving them the use of some prisoners or coolies, as deemed necessary.

People were obliged to keep the streets before their own premises clean and paid their own *chumar* for sweeping. The local police would see that the streets were kept clean, reporting the accumulation of filth on any individual's property, which that individual was required to promptly remove.

Every citizen had to repair his own wall or house when needed, because there were instances of old walls falling suddenly and killing people.[12] Hence, all cases of suspect walls or houses which might collapse and endanger life were reported to the Magistrate, who gave these owners a specified time within which either to repair or pull them down. In the event of non-compliance, coolies were sent to pull down those portions deemed in danger of tumbling. The expense was defrayed either by the owner or by proceeds from the sale of the dismantled materials.

In cases where drains were newly constructed or repaired, the people residing in the mahalla concerned agreed amongst themselves what each house was to contribute. In the event of opposition from any quarter, the majority would petition the Magistrate, who, if he agreed to the propriety of the work, gave them the aid of police or some particular officer they chose. This system never failed to be effective. The rate varied, of

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course, depending upon the nature of the work and the number of houses affected. The usual contribution varied from Rs. 2.5 to 8 annas for each chouk. The police assisted in the levying, but they were expressly prohibited from touching any monies collected by the chief residents of the ward and this money could, in turn, be deposited with anyone other than a police officer. The expenditure of these funds was also controlled by the residents.

In cases where the Magistrate ordered a drain or other such work to be done and the first steps had not been taken by the inhabitants themselves, the Superintendent of Roads, the Kotwal or the local *Thanahdar* called the people of the mahalla together and they decided how much each house must contribute. If expedient, the Magistrate gave them the aid of some prisoners or coolies to lighten the burden of the citizens. The method then differed very little from what had been pursued when the people initiated the work themselves. Each householder either deposited the sum assessed upon his house or was obliged, if the drain entered his property, to carry it on through to his neighbour's. The local police watched it being built and the Magistrate or an assistant occasionally visited the spot to see that all was going smoothly.

In some of the large mahallas, the inhabitants themselves entered into contracts with the *chowdree* (headman) of the sweepers to keep their drains and streets clean. In general, there was very little difficulty in maintaining a tolerable state of cleanliness, as long as the police took the necessary steps whenever an accumulation of filth was observed.

Any obstructions caused by the occasional intractable householder were generally overcome with a little persuasion from the authorities, aided by the remonstrances of his more reasonable neighbours.

There were *panchayets*, resident organizations, in many mahallas. Even if not officially set up or recognized by the administration, these panchayets must have played an important role in dealing with various issues of a minor or even major nature, often arriving at a settlement to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned.[13]

When disputes could not be settled mutually, the local administration undertook the necessary intervention or the contending parties could resort to the local administrative authority.

Thus the Phatakbandi and Panchayet Systems formed the nucleus of the later municipal organization in Varanasi.[14]

It has been wrongly held by many that the phataks were demolished in

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1852 by Government order on the occasion of a popular agitation in the City, since records dated 6 March 1856 clearly mention that 'the fatakbandi system still continued in the old part of the City.'[15] One may also question the contention that it was the Government that broke the phataks. Why would the authorities suddenly order the system's indiscriminate demolition, when they had been so keen on continuing the system hitherto ?

Again, the travel accounts of Varanasi during 1857-60 give clear testimony to the existence of the phataks in the City.[16] For example, Jadunath Sarvadhikari, a Bengalee traveller who left a detailed description of the City in 1857-58, recorded that there were no less than five thousand phataks there. This account, though apparently greatly exaggerated, at least indicates that he observed a good number of phataks some five years after the disturbance of 1852.[17]

However, while the Phatakbandi System was confined to the old part of the City, the Chowkeedaree System was being gradually introduced into newer parts of Varanasi, including Secrole and other border mahallas and suburbs.[18]

PUBLIC WORKS BY INDIVIDUALS

In a holy City like Varanasi, various works of public welfare and utility were undertaken by rich individuals or leading citizens as acts of piety. Some of these works, done during the period under review, are mentioned in Chapters VI, XVI and XVIII.

EARLY STAGES OF PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT

There were works connected with repairs, maintenance, construction of roads and other regular municipal services, which were beyond the purview of the phatakbandi. A powerful central body with the necessary infrastructure and funds was required to undertake such works. Besides, co-ordination would also be necessary with such large projects. Hence, in the absence of a central body of citizens, some vital public services suffered until local government came forward to take the initiative. But Government had to face an array of problems while addressing these issues.

First and foremost among them was the unplanned spread of habitats, a common feature not only of India, but of most old cities around the world. Unplanned settlement made improvements to sewerage, roads, etc., more difficult.

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The popular distrust of a foreign government was another obstacle. Though this new government succeeded considerably in establishing law and order in the City, for which the local people were fully appreciative, they still could not put their full trust in it. This became especially evident when the Government attempted to impose certain regulations like the one of 1790.[19] Even when the Government's motives in introducing reforms were good, it was expedient to take the people into confidence before introducing any major changes. But attempts in that direction were rarely made, resulting in popular distrust of and discontent with some of the Government's regulations regarding public works. Even a wise and sympathetic administrator like Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident in Benares, failed to understand this point when he criticized the people of Varanasi on the eve of the popular *Hurtal* on 24 August, 1790.[20]

Finally, there was also a problem with regard to funds for undertaking public works. Though it was understood that the expense of keeping the wider streets clean should be defrayed by the local government, it could not be determined from which source the money would come, though many alternatives were suggested from time to time.[21] For some time in the early 1790s, these expenses, which varied from Rs. 250 to Rs. 260, were met from a court fund.[22]

In spite of these problems the local administration undertook at least certain public works like the repair of banks, ghats and streets; the construction of public houses and bridges; and the digging and cleaning of drains etc., some of which are mentioned below.

A large water course had been excavated to drain off a considerable part of the stagnant waters from Benyram Pandit's garden to the Baruna River at a sum of Rs. 70-10-3 in 1795.[23] The revetment (retaining wall) at Shivala Ghat was completed in 1799.[24] A bridge was constructed over the Varuna River in 1789.[25] Roads around Secrole were also repaired in 1795.[26]

COMMITTEE FOR LOCAL IMPROVEMENT

Works of repairs and development under the Government continued randomly until the setting up of the Committee for Local Improvement for the systematic planning and undertaking of public works. This Committee, which came into being in 1823 and was abolished in 1829, held altogether 61 meetings during this period. A detailed report and minutes of each meeting of this Committee throw light on its activities and achievements.[27]

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James Prinsep*, Assay-master of Benares and Secretary to the Committee, gives the following important account in regard to the origin of the Committee in his minutes of November 1829:

> 'In 1823 Governor-General Adam first pointed out to the people of India that an English Ruler could unite in his administration the interests of the Government and the welfare of the governed and that the true principle of governing did not imply the exaction and absorption by the mother country of the largest possible revenue from his tribute state.'

Adam pronounced that there was a surplus beyond the wants of the government and he took upon himself the responsibility of devoting a small portion thereof to the amelioration of the country. He was justly praised for that measure and the praise was loudly repeated at the wanted liberality of the Court of Directors in confirming what he had done.

It was with the idea of devoting a small portion of surplus government revenue to municipal works that the Committee was formed. The Committee was manned by William Augustus Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General, Robert H. Rattray, Norman Macleod and James Prinsep. Prinsep was appointed Secretary to the Committee. It is evident from the following resolution taken during its very first meeting of November 8, 1823, how judiciously and cautiously the Committee started to function:

> 'Resolved that as previous to any great measure being undertaken for the benefit of the town, much time must be necessarily occupied in gaining preliminary information, drawing plans, preparing a series of levels and so forth. It will be advisable to employ the interim in executing some necessary repair at the Madho Ray Musjid, commonly known by the name of the Minaret. The Committee are aware that the general objects set forth in the Resolution of Government do not particularize the repair of places of religious worship. Still they cannot suppose them excluded from their interference when their position, structure and maintenance are ultimately connected with the safety, convenience and ornament of a town: In the present instance the repairs proposed are only such as are almost necessary for the preservation of the most conspicuous edifice in Benares. The expenditure will be by no means great and the undertaking of such a work on the part of the Committee will secure the popularity of their appointment among the inhabitants of the town.
>
> At the same time to prevent all grounds of jealousy between the Hindoos and Mussulmans the Committee sought some object venerated by the former which might be taken in hand simultaneously with the others. The Nag Kooan, a well at

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* Later on, Prinsep was elected the Secretary of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1833 where he served for six years. He became renowned as the Indologist who deciphered the Ashokan inscriptions.

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which a large annual mela is held, offers a suitable opportunity since it is not supported by any fund or proprietorship as are most of the Hindu temples, and very little is wanted to preserve it from further dilapidation.'

The Committee wanted to repair the Church Missionary Society's Jaynarayan School, which had sustained much damage from rain. The Committee wanted the repairs because it held that the school was 'a public concern connected with the interest and advantage of the City of Benares'. But the government declined to sanction the repairs.[28] The construction of the Missir Pokhra Bridge and its approaches was completed on 31 October 1824 at the cost of Rs. 4750-15-9. The benefits already perceptible from this work could be best understood by the fact that the price of land in the Nawabganj Bazar rose from 4 annas per square *guj* (yard) to 3 rupees.[29] The construction of Bhyronath Thana was completed on 31 January 1825, the total expense including the repairs of the well and drain, and the building of a small *musjid* (mosque) and additional sheds for *Thana* peons, amounting to Rs.2359-5-0.[30] At its thirtieth meeting, the Committee resolved to purchase 102 guj of ground in Thuttheri Bazar from one Maya Ram Thakur and also 42 guj from his neighbour to widen the street there. The Asi Bridge was completed at the expense of Rs. 3000 in 1827. The arch on the waterway of that bridge had an elliptical, 35-foot span with a roadway 100 feet long and 25 feet wide.[31] The Magistrate of the City also lent his support to these works taken up by the Committee.[32]

COMMITTEE RULES ON ASSESSMENT

On August 7, 1826, the fortyninth meeting of the Committee set up certain rules to be observed with respect to the assessment of mahallas for the cleaning of the common sewers. The rules, quoted below, give us the list of some of the main drains running through the City and also show how the Committee planned to involve and encourage people in matters of public welfare and common interest. The farsightedness and integrity of the Committee is exemplified by its framing of the following rules :

1. That upon the requisition of the inhabitants of a Mahalla, or upon the Committee being otherwise informed that any sewer or street drain requires to be opened, cleaned or repaired, public notice shall be given by 'ishtihar' that houses having communication with the said drain are called upon to contribute towards the expense thereof, according to their number of chouks and to the established rates of assessment under the former system of management.
2. That the person or persons appointed by the Committee to receive the said contributions shall in every case give a receipt for the sums collected, and account

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for the same immediately with the Committee's office, where a counter receipt shall be granted.

3. That the repairs and cleaning of the drains shall be wholly conducted under the superintendence of the Committee's officers. The inhabitants however being encouraged to bring to their notice any inactivity or misdemeanour of the workmen employed.
4. That upon the conclusion of the work a public account in Hindi and Persian shall be affixed in some conspicuous part of the mahalla, setting for the contribution of every individual, with their names, the number of chouks on the debtor side, and on the creditor side a daily statement of expense incurred; and if there shall be a balance in favour of the mahalla, it shall be notified that the Committee hold it to their credit for future occasions. Complaints, petitions or information to be addressed to any member of the Committee.
5. That there shall be kept in the Committee's office separate from their own public work accounts, a set of Books expressly for the mahalla operating and that each division of drains shall have a separate account current, comprehending the several mahallas through which it may pass.The divisions which will at present require separate entries are as follows:
    a. The Bula Nala main drain
    b. The Chowkhamba main drain
    c. The Jytanbur main drain
    d. The Kotwalpura main drain
    e. The Siddheshwari waterway drain
    f. The Dashashwamedh main drain and so forth
6. That a Register shall also be kept of houses and residents of each mahalla drawn from the documents furnished by the drain accounts, so that in the process of time a tolerable census of the population of the city may be obtained without the least umbrage or suspicion.

At that same meeting, a proposal made by one Hamilton (perhaps the Magistrate of the City at that time) regarding the establishment of a botanical garden at one Graham's bunglow and grounds at Secrole with either the Committee's fund or the Government's fund was discussed. But it was put forward that there were too many arguments against such a proposition, namely, the local climate and the soil were decidedly unfavourable; the expense of superintendence of the proposed garden in an efficient way would be considerable; individuals inclined to take advantage of supplies of seeds furnished from the Company's gardens at Calcutta, Tirhoot and Saharanpoor would always pay more attention to their cultivation and success in their private gardens than in a public establishment. In the end, it appears that the proposal was not passed.

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ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS

The general abstract of the accounts of the Committee for Improvement under the headings 'Town Duty Fund' and 'Ferry Fund' have been placed in the Appendix. This shows that funds available for repair and development were moderate and properly utilized.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

The achievements of the Committee in its brief span can be best illustrated by the following facts:

When the Committee was first formed the local people had been partly apprehensive of and partly indifferent to it. This attitude was finally transformed into 'unfeigned regret and disappointment' among all classes of citizens when the Committee had to be dissolved.[33] In fact, the Committee's activities brought about a significant change in the popular attitude in favour of such development works by a foreign body. Thus the citizens who had once demonstrated against the construction and use of public privies in 1790[34] raised no objection to the construction of public privies later in 1850s. The citizens learnt to appreciate perceptibly the gradual introduction of an improved system of public services through an agency like the Committee. It was with the most sincere regret that they viewed the cessation of so advantageous and desirable a channel for the gradual amelioration and advancement of the best interests of the City.[35]

The Committee had also hoped to cement relations between the people and the Committee as an institution distinct from the Government 'as a civil or municipal office intended to promote the welfare, movement and cleanliness of their town—accessible without formality and without expense and continually present among them to inspect, advise, encourage or check whatever came within its province.'[36] To this aim, the Committee had succeeded to a great extent. That is why it can be reasonably concluded that this Committee in many respects was the precursor of the modern Municipal Corporation of the City of Varanasi.

PRINSEP : CENTRAL FIGURE OF THE COMMITTEE

The central figure of this Committee was obviously James Prinsep, to whom, according to the other members, the Committee owed all its honour and appreciation.[37] His unwearied and solicitous attention to problems, his fullest and most equitable method of producing the most

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advantageous result and his readiness and willingness to meet the views of Committee members were responsible for executing the multitude of inestimable improvements* suggested and planned by him.[38] The following incident shows how meticulously projects were supervised by Prinsep and how intelligently and judiciously he managed his affairs as a strict but sympathetic and prudent administrator.

Building the Matsyodari Tunnel required the best materials and workmanship, especially where it opened to the river sixty feet under a perpendicular earthen bank. Prinsep, while inspecting the work on January 30, 1826, removed one of the apparently well fitted and joined stones from the side wall. He discovered that it rested only on its edge, there being in the interior from one to one and a half inches of mortar. At once he ordered the whole wall to be taken down and inspected stone by stone.

The *rajmistri* (mason) who had received a high contract rate for squaring each stone, and the *chuprassee* whose duty it was to give notice of any infraction of the directives, were sent by Prinsep to the *thana* (Police Station) threatening them with prosecution for damages done. But Prinsep observed that in reality, such a prosecution would be of no avail from a pecuniary point of view, with people who lived by their daily earnings; moreover, any corporal punishment, supposing any would be inflicted, would injure, rather than improve, a respectable artisan by breaking his spirit and depriving him of his *izzut* (honour). Prinsep finally suggested giving a serious caution and reproof to the offenders before a full session of the Committee. He also suggested that it would materially assist him in conducting the work and controlling the workmen employed if before engagement, the headmen of the workers were summoned for approval before the Committee and made liable to dismissal by them alone. The aforementioned accused individuals were accordingly called before the Committee and reprimanded.[39]

When a proposal was raised recommending a grant of remuneration to Prinsep for his dedicated work as Secretary to the Committee, Prinsep's reaction was remarkable for its spirit of disinterested and devoted service to the City. Prinsep writes in his minutes on this issue :

> 'I beg to assure my colleagues that I shall have pleasure in continuing to superintend such works as we are allowed to prosecute gratuitously and I should be *offended* (italics by the author) at having to look to the generosity or the recommendation of the Committee for remuneration for my labour as it has always been rather from an interest in the welfare of the Town than from any pecuniary advantage to myself that I have hitherto held the situation of Secretary.'[40]

---

* The drainage system designed by Prinsep was, however, adversely criticized by H. R. Nevill in his *Benares Gazetteer* of 1909, p. 264.

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In fact, when the new *ganj* (market-place) in Hallo Gadhwa could not be completed at the expense of the Committee owing to the latter's abolition, Prinsep was so eager to complete it that he wanted to lease the ground and finish the construction at his own expense. The Committee granted Prinsep this request on October 31, 1829, and asked him to furnish a statement of profit and loss incurred on the project during this period and expend the surplus, if any, to the benefit of the City.[41]

It was also Prinsep who first took a dependable census of the City, completed in 1829 at his own expense and with the help of his people, for which he deserves special credit and appreciation.[42]

THE COMMITTEE'S ABOLITION

The Committee was abolished by the Government on the plea of economic constraints necessitated mainly by the first Burmese War (1824-26). But Prinsep quite reasonably doubted in his minutes of 31 October 1829, on the occasion of the Committee's abolition, whether Town duties should be expended for some purpose other than the development of the town.

PRINSEP'S MINUTES : REVIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS

Prinsep claimed in the above mentioned minutes that though the Committee's reign had indeed been very brief and the benefits it hoped to confer upon the City had hardly developed, it had at least acquired a reputation for utility as well as an intimate knowledge of the City. The Committee had kept a watchful eye upon every new building, had prevented encroachments and settled many boundary disputes. Besides its ordinary business in conducting improvements, it had in every way encouraged undertakings of utility or ornament, although its hand had been somewhat restrained in setting a worthy and dignified example.

Prinsep pointed out that while resident pensioned noblemen and disinherited princes were embellishing the City in massive stone above ground, the members of the Committee, were content to labour in humble brick underground. Prinsep remarks '... they (the members of the Committee) had done good that will be felt, I hope, when the means and the origin (of the Committee) may be long forgotten.'

He also expressed 'a little regret' that the connection which had for those few years started to establish a rapport between the people and the Committee 'as a civic or municipal office, an institution distinct from

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authority, intending to promote the welfare, improvement and cleanliness of Varanasi City', would be lost with the abolition of the Committee. The service of the Committee, which was continually present among the people to inspect, advise and encourage, would also no longer be available. These, held Prinsep, were of 'far greater value than the mere pecuniary savings to which the Honourable Company (the Government) appear solely to advert.'

There was also a point of discrimination in the just issued Circular Order of the Government, which Prinsep criticizes and laments with the following:

> 'That Calcutta alone is exempted from its operation showing to the native that the rule of economy may be relaxed where their European lords are to be benefited while their own convenience and comfort are to be taxed and diminished, as they may justly suppose, to add to those of the masters.'

In saying that the 'natives' comforts were taxed, Prinsep alluded to the separate and distinct levy of a 'Town Duty', which was vexatious and inconvenient to the local people. Prinsep suggested that the Town Duty 'ought truly to bring some benefit in compensation to the inhabitants of a Town upon whom it is exclusively levied.'

Prinsep also commented in his minutes that the 'functions (of the Committee) judiciously exercised have tended to improve the understanding between the natives and the English to stimulate the benevolent purposes of the former.' Prinsep also recorded works which had been already designed and/or started by the Committee under him that were to be completed by the Government. He offers his services and assistance also in this regard writing :

> 'I had in view the establishment of a Gola of corn or vegetable market on the site of the late Haloo Gurha,which would not only be a vast convenience to the most populous part of the Town, but would, I calculate, have soon yielded a profit to the Committee. As I still feel anxious to complete this object, I shall venture to ask as a last favour from the Committee or through them from the Government, that I may hold a lease for 10 years, of this ground, and furnish the buildings at my own expense, and perhaps thus provide a fund for other improvements which shall not be liable to alienation from the Town.
>
> The *Mundakinee & Mutsyoduree* grounds had also perhaps been better farmed out to someone who can attend to their cultivation which, although a losing concern at first, will soon repay with interest.
>
> I request the attention of the Magistrate to the annual cleaning of the tunnel and drains connected therewith, otherwise they will soon become choked up and useless, the Beneea drain also. The different bridges and roads will of course come under his

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care, and I beg him to finish, if possible, this season the filling of *kunkur* and earth on the Sombanala Bridge (?) and its approaches, or it may be seriously injured.

Yumajee on the part of Chiman Appa has been supported by me in ornamenting the *Gyan Bapee*, and paving the Vishveshwar gulee. Sindeea's mookhteer was to have been assisted in constructing a grand ghat at Mangala Gouree (which) was in progress last season, but I feel the foundations are badly constructed.'

Prinsep also referred to the census he had undertaken in his minutes and remembers his promise in this respect with:

'I have completed the census. I have uniformly engaged to the Town's people that no detriment should ensue to them from my registering their names and abodes and I hope that my promise will be remembered by future authorities.'

Prinsep closes his final 'Committee Minutes' with his thoughts regarding the Town Duty Fund. He writes :

'May the time soon come when the Honourable Court of Directors shall once more open the hand of liberality and grant the use of the Town Duty Funds to the purpose for which they should naturally be appropriated, or confer a still greater boon in abolishing them altogether if the Towns are to derive no benefit from them.'[43]

A study of Prinsep's minutes shows how much a foreigner loved and laboured for this City without an iota of self-interest. In his love for Varanasi, he did not even shrink from criticizing the Government, his employer and the product of his own nation.

FINANCING PUBLIC WORKS

We have already stated that the Committee for Local Improvement spent money for cleaning streets and other similar works. This money came from the Ferry Fund, income derived from ferries used in crossing the river, and the Town Duty, income from a duty imposed upon commodities exported from and imported to Varanasi. The system worked nicely until the abolition of the Committee in 1829. The Town Duty was also abolished in the 1830s.[44] The Magistrate of the City was asked to explore the possibilities of getting income by imposing some general taxation for municipal works. The Magistrate discussed this issue and its possible adverse consequences at length in a letter dated 30 July 1836.[45] Therein he perceived that considerable opposition would be experienced with any attempt to impose a general tax on the inhabitants. He wrote:

'The people of one part of the Town do not care for any improvements in another.... Though they will contribute to what is for their own individual advantage, but they will object to their contributions being expended elsewhere than in their own

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ward.... I am not convinced of the expediency of forcing European Municipal laws and usages upon the towns and cities of our provinces.

If I were called upon, however, to carry any orders of the kind into effect, I would not recommend the levying and disbursing of any assessment be left to a Committee of inhabitants alone, for I am certain that unless there were some Government servants to take the lead, stimulate, and guide the others, no good would be done....

Perhaps the fairest impost would be one regulated by the extent of the premises presented to the street, a certain rate being demanded per each 25 or 30 feet, or any other quantity that may hereafter be determined upon. To impose any impost upon exports or imports would be to renew the system of Town duties which had so lately been abolished; moreover, taxes too upon wheeled carriages, such as *ekkahs*, hackeries, cycles, as well as upon animals of burden kept for hire or the purpose of conveyance would not answer the purpose and this, which must be very light, would yield too small a sum for any useful purpose. As regards increase of the rate of hire it had been already more than prevails ... in any other part of the Country....

Might not the revenue from the firms over the Ganges immediately in front of the City be given up for the advantage of the residents; by this means a sum of somewhere about Rs. 5000/- per annum would be made available for the purposes of conservancy, and for improving the health & cleanliness of the City and its inhabitants.'

No decision about the source of income for such works was arrived at. However, the Government sometimes offered special grants for them.[46] Moreover, the establishment of the *Fouzdary Adalat* of Varanasi in 1837, which is given below, shows that there was an establishment of scavangers attached to the Adalat for undertaking works of cleaning and the like in the City.

Category	Total workers	Monthly per worker	Monthly Total
Darogah	1	Rs.9	Rs.9
Chuprasees	6	Rs.4	Rs.24
Dhangurhs	66	Rs.3	Rs.198
Sardar of *Dhangurh*	1	Rs.5	Rs.5
Jharoo Kussees	9	Rs.1-14	Rs.16-14-x

It appears from the above data that though the residents were mainly responsible for cleaning the local streets and drains, the cleaning of public places and public drains and wider streets did not form part of their responsibilities. These were cleaned by the staff listed above under the supervision of the local administration that appointed them and bore their expenses.[47]

With the abolition of the Committee, the development work did not

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stop altogether, but unlike the works undertaken by the Committee, popular involvement and identification was lacking in these. Among the projects taken up by the Government in later years, the most important was the construction of the massive building of Queen's College (The Sanskrit College) at a huge expenditure in 1848-1852.

The following statement of 1856 also shows the public works (including additional construction to Queen's College in and around 1856) with special grants from the Government. This statement also shows another important aspect of the work, i.e., the labourers employed in such works were prisoners.[48] Such employment was, however, discouraged by Davidson, the Magistrate, in his report in 1842, as convicts thus employed sometimes managed to escape.[49]

STATEMENT OF 1856 FOR THE QUANTITY OF WORKS DONE IN AND NEAR VARANASI WITH SPECIAL GRANTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT[50]

Description of work	Length	Masonry	Contents of earth heaped	Amount expended	Price paid for the block of buildings on the river face	Total Rupees
	(ft.)	(ft.)	(ft.)	Rs.Anna.P.	Rs.Anna.P.	Rs.Anna.P.
(A) *Godowlia Drain*	3140	204978	925392	22705-13-10	5800-00-00	28505-13-10
Remarks: The height of the egg-shaped drain at its commencement was 6 feet and the width 4 feet. The drain gradually increased in size to the river where its dimensions were in height 7 feet (width not known).						
(B) *New Insane Hospital*	140	204223/4	-	1158-02-09	-	-
Ditto	140	204223/4	-	1100-00-00	-	2258-02-09
Remarks: Only two Barracks had been completed at present. Four more remained to be built, besides the Government's House, Out Office, etc. The grant made for this work was Rs. 10751/-						

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(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(C) *New Jail*	125	11966	-	714-09-06	-	-
Ditto	125	11966	-	714-09-06	-	1429-03-00
Remarks: A new plan was under preparation. The work therefore had been temporarily suspended.						
(D) *Chowka Ghat Bridge*	350	146400	-	26340-13-10	-	26340-13-10
(E) *City Thana Building*	-	-	-	12702-02-03	-	12702-02-03
Remarks : Handsome substantial buildings.						
(F) *Excavating the ruins at Sarnath*				263-01-00		
Remarks : This work had been stopped temporarily as the prisoners who were workers there had not been available.						
(G) *Paddle Boats*				5000-00-00		
(H) *10 City Roads*				3110-15-09		
Remarks : Four of the principal thoroughfares had already been metalled and others were in progress.						
(I) *The College*				152398-02-05		
Remarks : This notable building was called Queen's College, too well-known to require any remarks.						

THE SEWER SYSTEM AND WATER SUPPLY

The Register of Municipal Development in Varanasi of 1852, like that of 1856, also shows similar examples of public works done by the Government. But as far as the sewer system was concerned, the Government did very little

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except cleaning and repairing the old 'Nawabi Drains'. It would appear from the size, section and grade of these drains, which were 'quite unique,' that they were primarily designed for the disposal of storm water and not for the small flow of sewage. Nevertheless, these drains had been used for a long time for the disposal of the sewage of the City also.[51] And as two-thirds of the drains, such as the Brahma Nala, the Dashashwamedh Nala and Godowlia Nala, discharged their filth into the Ganga, its waters were considerably polluted.

People had to depend largely on the Ganga for water, which was subject to pollution as we have just noted, and also on large tanks and wells distributed almost everywhere in the City for all sorts of uses. *Pukka Mahal* (the inner zone of the City's built-up area), in particular, had wells either in the courtyards or near the entrances of houses, providing additional sources of water. Overall, the water-supply system till the end of our period[52] was neither organized nor sufficient to meet the total requirements of the City, especially with regard to potable water.

THE MUNICIPAL BOARD

The above study reveals that from the inception of British rule till 1857, very little was done to meet the needs of the City, such as the construction of a good network of roads, organization of a thorough sewer system or sufficient provision of drinking water and lighting. Temporary or patchwork solutions or the odd development project could hardly solve the problems of the City, which was already over populated and growing haphazardly.

No comprehensive planning or programming for the City's development had been conducted nor had sufficient resources been made available for that purpose until Sep. 27, 1867 when the Municipal Board was instituted under the Indian Municipal Act XXVI of 1850.[53] The Board comprised the City Magistrate, four Government officials and sixteen non-official members selected from seven wards of the City. These non-officials, among whom were Raja Shivaprasad and Gurudas Mitra, would take part in Board deliberations handling municipal issues like public roads and drains. This newly formed Board, after being reframed by the North-West Province and Oudh Municipal Act XIV of 1883,[54] combined in a way the old traditions of self-administration under the Phatakbandi and Panchayet Systems and the new traditions of public welfare under a well-organized body such as the Committee for Local Improvement. And although still under the constraints of a foreign government, this Board paved the way for the establishment of a city administration 'of the people, by the people, for the people'[55] of Varanasi.

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APPENDIX - A

A. **Town Duty Fund**

1. To cash received—amount of drafts on the Collector :

	Year	Rupees Annas Pices
	1823	12723 - 07 - 04
	1824	28539 - 07 - 06
	1825	10375 - 07 - 09
	1826	19719 - 14 - 06
	1827	23000 - 00 - 00
Amount of drain assessments collected in the City		209 - 11 - 06
	1828	22000 - 00 - 00
Amount surplus Rent of Chandnee Chouk paid to the Committee for the repair of the Chouk by the Magistrate:		
19 May	1829	2517 - 03 - 01
1 May to 31 October	1829	14215 - 06 - 03
Amount received from Magistrate for Ausanganj Thana		150 - 00 - 00
Total		1,33,450 - 09 - 00
To deduct Drafts transferred to Ferry Fund account		20,512 - 03 - 00
Total		1,12,938 - 06 - 00

2. By Cash Expended: Amount of yearly Abstracts

	Year	Sum
	1823	11974 - 15 - 05
	1824	29878 - 15 - 06
	1825	13934 - 08 - 10
	1826	13573 - 15 - 01
	1827	17586 - 06 - 07
	1828	13553 - 03 - 08
1 May to 31 October	1829	9919 - 01 - 00
October 31: Chouk Surplus repaid to Magistrate on abolition of Committee as no repairs had been commenced.	1829	2517 - 03 - 01
Total		1,12,938 - 06 - 00

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	Year	Rupees Annas Pices
B. **Ferry Fund**		
To amount balance of Ferry Fund received in charges from the Magistrate as lodged in the Collector's Treasury :		26214 - 13 - 09
To cash received from the Magistrate Office on account of Ferry Collections:		
	1825	5077 - 14 - 09
	1828	6716 - 15 - 06
	1829	4011 - 00 - 00
	1829	6885 - 00 - 00
1 May - 31 October	1829	2585 - 00 - 00
Total		25275 - 14 - 09
		51490 - 12 - 06

Memorandum

Paid by transfer of Bills by the Magistrate on giving over charge:	1177 - 08 - 04
Paid by cash collections:	25275 - 14 - 09
Paid by Drafts transferred from Town Duty account during the Committee's time:	21691 - 11 - 04
(ii) Account Expended as per contra:	48145 - 02 - 05

By Expended as per year by abstracts furnished by the Committee:

	Year	Amount
	1825-6	8387 - 08 - 08
	1826-7	5881 - 05 - 03
	1827-8	7392 - 04 - 08
	1828-9	17274 - 12 - 10
1May to 31st October1829	Total	48145 - 02 - 05
Balance Treasury transferred this day (November 1829) to the Magistrate...		3345 - 10 - 01
	Total	51490 - 12 - 06

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To cash received from the Magistrate Office on account of Ferry Collections:		
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	1828	6716 - 15 - 06
	1829	4011 - 00 - 00
	1829	6885 - 00 - 00
1 May - 31 October	1829	2585 - 00 - 00
Total		25275 - 14 - 09
		51490 - 12 - 06
Memorandum		
Paid by transfer of Bills by the Magistrate on giving over charge:		1177 - 08 - 04
Paid by cash collections:		25275 - 14 - 09
Paid by Drafts transferred from Town Duty account during the Committee's time:		21691 - 11 - 04
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By Expended as per year by abstracts furnished by the Committee:

	Year	Amount
	1825-6	8387 - 08 - 08
	1826-7	5881 - 05 - 03
	1827-8	7392 - 04 - 08
	1828-9	17274 - 12 - 10
1May to 31st October1829	Total	48145 - 02 - 05
Balance Treasury transferred this day (November 1829) to the Magistrate...		3345 - 10 - 01
	Total	51490 - 12 - 06

APPENDIX - B

Statement of the Assessment for local watchmen in the City of Varanasi in 1809

(A) Mahallas guarded by watchmen entertained and paid by the persons residing there as prescribed by Section 28 Regn. of 1795.

(1) Names of Mahallas (2) Houses with stone chouks (3) Houses with brick chouks (4) Houses with mud chouks (5) Brick koothries (6) Mud koothries (7) Total (8) Number of phataks or gateways (9) Number of watchmen (10) Monthly assessment in rupees, collected from the inhabitants after deducting the houses of devotees (temples and monastaries) (11) Monthly salaries of watchmen in rupees (12) Surplus applicable to the repair of phataks.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10*	11*	12*
Lahoree Tola	26	79	6	,,	,,	111	4	4	14 ,, ,,	13 ,, ,,	1 ,, ,,
Siddheshwaree	48	95	4	,,	,,	147	8	8	26 1 ,,	25 ,, ,,	1 1 ,,
Ramghat	85	54	2	,,	,,	141	7	7	24 8 ,,	22 ,, ,,	2 8 ,,
Soodh Tola	93	54	,,	,,	,,	147	4	4	14 5 9	13 ,, ,,	1 5 9
Banbee Sahid	10	17	1	,,	,,	28	2	2	7 12 ,,	7 ,, ,,	,, 12 ,,
Bur Uheea	2	17	1	,,	,,	20	2	2	7 7 ,,	7 , ,,	,, 7 ,,,
Gali Deydhmal	4	19	2	,,	,,	25	2	2	8 4 9	7 ,, ,,	1 4 9
Bhyronath	3	66	6	,,	,,	75	4	4	14 8 6	13 ,, ,,	1 8 6
Caunbhut Ganeysh	40	14	,,	,,	,,	54	2	2	8 ,, ,,	7 ,, ,,	1 ,, ,,
Ranajee	10	18	18	,,	,,	46	3	3	11 10 ,,	10 ,, ,,	1 10 ,,
Ghasee Tola	28	22	1	,,	,,	51	3	3	11 3 ,,	10 ,, ,,	1 3 ,,

* Figures for 11 mahallas under these heads have been furnished just to give some ideas on these items.

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①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Ganesh Chamrea	20	57	2	,,	,,	79	4	4			
Nandun Saho	53	38	,,	,,	,,	91	4	4			
Jangam Baree	2	3	148	,,	,,	153	3	3			
Goal Das Saho	63	81	1	,,	,,	145	6	6			
Madhoram	33	37	1	,,	,,	71	4	4			
Chah Mehma	7	29	30	,,	,,	66	4	4			
Bhikhari Das	28	32	,,	,,	,,	60	3	3			
Patnee Tola	8	32	3	,,	,,	43	3	3			
Gali Latto	11	9	1	,,	,,	21	1	1			
Pathur Gallia	1	30	2	,,	,,	33	2	2			
Nepali Khapra	3	19	4	,,	,,	26	2	2			
Laloo Sund	6	32	4	,,	,,	42	3	3			
Gola Gali	24	20	1	,,	,,	45	2	2			
Nai Ghat	2	5	,,	,,	,,	7	1	1			
Narayan Dikshit	27	36	,,	,,	,,	63	4	4			
Chouk Dadoojee	8	19	1	,,	,,	28	1	1			
Brahmapuri Phulbai Kewal Geerea	3	10	,,	,,	,,	13	1	1			
Brahmapuri Ahalyabai	23	22	,,	,,	,,	45	4	4			
Gopal Das Saho	27	20	3	,,	,,	50	3	3			
Gobindpoora	10	50	35	,,	,,	95	6	6			

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Brahmapuri Ranee Bhowanee	9	16	,,	,,	,,	25	1	1			
Moorlee Tumakoo Furosh	1	12	,,	,,	,,	13	1	1			
Madanpura	4	161	82	,,	,,	247	6	6			
Gobindpoora Rajah Bazar		9	40	10	,,	,,	59	4			
Brahmapuri Nathoo Sahoo	3	14	1	,,	,,	18	1	1			
Gali Khudeyrumal	8	8	,,	,,	,,	16	1	1			
Tickeyt Roy	3	55	5	,,	,,	63	3	3			
Gobindjee Naik	41	26	,,	,,	,,	67	4	4			
Doodh Vinayak	77	46	,,	,,	,,	123	4	4			
Rungil Das	17	11	,,	,,	,,	28	2	2			
Gali Kaika	4	35	9	,,	,,	48	3	3			
Gali Chundoo Huzum	8	42	2	,,	,,	52	3	3			
HouZ Kuttorah	21	60	97	,,	,,	178	4	4			
Sharkand	3	23	16	,,	,,	42	2	2			
Barah Buljore Singh	,,	1	75	,,	44	120	3	3			
Gola Deenanth	,,	11	27	29	101	168	6	6			
Madho Das Sameea	8	3	,,	,,	,,	11	1	1			
Bagh Bhandaree	1	2	4	2	,,	9	1	1			

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①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Rajmandil	4	74	46	17	89	230	4	4			
Gali Himmat Bahadoor	3	6	2	1	,,	12	1	1			
Gali Sookool (Sukhlal)	,,	8	,,	,,	,,	8	1	1			
Bagh Hara Khord	,,	2	,,	,,	31	33	1	1			
Chuprea Tola	1	11	1	8	85	106	2	2			
Birju Sahoo	5	3	,,	1	2	11	1	1			
Gali Shiuram Bhat	2	4	4	2	,,	12	1	1			
Dharmpoora	2	14	2	,,	,,	18	1	1			
Prannath Tewary	2	14	,,	1	,,	17	1	1			
Baole Kaulbhyro	,,	8	4	3	7	22	1	1			
Ponteea Tola	2	8	,,	,,	,,	10	1	1			
Kachauri Gali	2	8	,,	,,	,,	10	1	1			
Hunooman Chouraha	5	70	2	8	,,	85	4	4			
NawabManiar-ud-Daulah	,,	13	,,	10	,,	23	1	1			
Annapurna Biswesarnath	2	16	1	1	,,	20	2	2			
Kali Mahal	,,	2	28	,,	3	33	1	1			
Haujee Durs	1	6	8	,,	,,	15	1	1			
Mahta Tola	1	17	9	3	,,	30	2	2			

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Gaighat Boochoi Tola	2	87	34	,,	,,	123	4	4			
Luchman Josee	2	7	,,	,,	,,	9	1	1			
Kundigar Tola	1	52	65	,,	,,	118	4	4			
Gali Mansaram	,,	5	,,	,,	,,	5	1	1			
Ucha Gali	1	11	,,	,,	,,	12	1	1			
Gyan Vapi Rajgur Tola	3	39	17	12	33	104	4	4			
Peyree Kallan	,,	17	247	32	,,	296	6	6			
Gali Muazzam Khan	,,	9	,,	,,	,,	9	1	1			
Nandoo Farush	2	13	2	,,	,,	17	1	1			
Brahmnal	,,	12	6	,,	,,	18	1	1			
Bibihatia	3	7	1	,,	,,	11	1	1			
Manmundil	,,	4	92	,,	,,	96	3	3			
Gali Bhat	15	31	2	,,	,,	48	2	2			
Hajeedars	,,	22	8	,,	,,	30	2	2			
Gali Ganesh	,,	9	1	,,	,,	10	1	1			
Gali Madanmohan	1	12	1	,,	,,	14	1	1			
Sonarpoora	1	37	110	14	34	196	3	3			
Deonath Khord	,,	2	14	,,	,,	16	1	1			
Baugh Hara Kallan	,,	22	74	,,	,,	96	3	3			
Kotwalpura Jadu Manai	2	56	31	,,	,,	89	5	5			

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①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Ghee Hatta	3	19	88	4	80	194	3	3			
Mokim Ganj Kazee Takee	2	30	65	,,	12	109	5	5			
Someswar Mahadeo	1	12	4	2	1	20	1	1			
Meer Ghat	6	37	32	,,	25	100	3	3			
Ajeet Geer	2	,,	10	,,	,,	12	1	1			
Aghu Ganj	,,	,,	70	,,	67	137	1	1			
Total : 93 Mahallas	**1017**	**2446**	**1686**	**150**	**614**	**5913**	**240**	**240**	**836-14-7**	**1198-9-0**	**65-10-10**

(B) Mahallas provided with phataks or Gateways guarded by watchmen appointed by the Magistrate and paid by contributions levied from the inhabitants through the medium of the Kutwal in consequence of their having omitted to entertain to pay watchmen themselves under the rule prescribed in Section 28 Regn. 1795.

Mahalla Bengalee Tola	8	136	7	,,	,,	151	9	9
Garwai Tola	36	115	29	,,	,,	180	8	8
Sookhtal Sahu	22	74	5	,,	,,	101	7	7
Khaliapoora	22	82	2	,,	,,	106	6	6
Nala Boola	17	74	83	,,	,,	174	5	5
Koonj Gali Kallan	,,	,,	,,	112	,,	112	4	4
Ganesh	16	87	38	,,	,,	141	5	5

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Agasta Kunda	30	148	66	,,	,,	244	15	15			
Karnghanta	4	30	56	,,	,,	90	3	3			
Macher Hattah	13	52	7	,,	,,	72	3	3			
Ash Bhyro	20	50	10	,,	,,	80	2	2			
Gali Sidhmata	1	26	7	,,	,,	34	2	2			
Gali Amichand	2	4	,,	,,	,,	6	1	1			
Deonathpoora Kallan	1	21	10	,,	,,	32	2	2			
Chousattee Ghat	6	13	1	,,	,,	20	2	2			
Pande Ghat	6	26	1	,,	,,	33	2	2			
Aurangabad	3	71	168	2	2	245	7	7			
Bagh Soondar Das	6	17	17	7	6	53	2	2			
Brahmpuri Malduheea	1	8	1	1	,,	11	1	1			
Missir Pokhra	23	20	44	,,	,,	87	6	6			
Kashipura	1	43	38	61	,,	143	2	2			
Gali Champa Sahid	,,	7	,,	1	,,	8	1	1			
Ghauseeram Phatak	,,	13	,,	1	1	15	1	1			
Gali Giridharimal	1	7	,,	,,	,,	8	1	1			
Bhandrea Rola	1	8	1	1	,,	11	1	1			
Bhundari Gali	1	23	10	,,	,,	34	1	1			
Sevakram Sadavarti	8	53	19	,,	,,	80	3	3			
Nichi Brahmapuri	2	44	2	,,	,,	48	1	1			
Houle Maneear Singh	,,	7	185	,,	55	247	5	5			

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①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
Jugjewanpoorah	,,	2	67	,,	24	93	2	2			
Kotwaulpoorah	,,	9	,,	,,	,,	9	1	1			
Gangamahal Deonauth	,,	17	18	,,	,,	35	2	2			
Gali Seetaram	2	13	,,	,,	,,	15	1	1			
Sooraj Koond	2	11	47	7	87	154	5	5			
Hunoomaun Ganj	,,	5	37	,,	48	90	2	2			
Cheyt Ganj	,,	,,	45	,,	44	89	2	2			
Koonjgali Khord	,,	,,	,,	20	,,	20	1	1			
Teyree Neem	7	41	44	,,	2	94	3	3			
Peyree Khord	2	11	139	,,	11	163	4	4			
Hata Bhoulotun	,,	73	243	9	22	347	10	10			
List B Mahallas 40	264	1441	1447	222	302	3676	141	141	427-9-3	421-4-0	6-5-3
List A Mahallas 93	1017	2446	1686	150	614	5913	240	240	836-14-7°	777-9-0	59-5-7°
Grand Total Mahallas 133	**1281**	**3887**	**3133**	**372**	**916**	**9589**	**381**	**381**	**1264-7-10°**	**1198-13-0**	**65-10-10°**

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26. COV., Basta 1, Vol. I, List B, Sl. No. 891.
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45. *Ibid.*
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CHAPTER XI

PUBLIC HEALTH

CLIMATE AND GENERAL HEALTH

Varanasi is a place of climatic extremes, with blistering heat in the summer and chilling cold in winter, and though the rainfall is considerable, the climate is generally dry. This dry climate, coupled with the expansive green environs of the outskirts of the City and a steady supply of fresh provisions, would have had a positive effect on the health of the people. But with the extreme heat, other factors including a poor sewer system, polluted water, the already high concentration of people in the City's inner zone and increasing congestion in other areas owing to rapid growth, presented dangers to public health during the period under review. From this standpoint, living in the outer areas of Varanasi would have been healthier than in the congestion of the inner zone. In any case, September and October were reported to be the most unhealthy months.[1]

European travellers give conflicting statements about the public health in the City. Bishop Heber, for example, writes in 1824:

> 'The City is well drained and stands dry on a high rocky bank sloping to the river, to which circumstances, as well as to the frequent ablutions and great temperance of the people, must be ascribed its freedom from infectious diseases. Accordingly, notwithstanding its crowded population, it is not a unhealthy City.'[2]

Another European traveller holds quite the opposite view, recording earlier in 1798:

> 'In point of health Benares must be still more hostile (than Calcutta?); the streets are only a few feet broad; confined with high buildings on each side, so that the rays of the sun can hardly penetrate the bottom of the lanes, are impervious to wind and covered with cow-dung, foul water and every kind of filth.'[3]

The fact is that both of these statements are only partially true, as will become evident from our study. In short, the City was generally healthy, but only at particular times of the year and only in particular areas.

THE CITY'S SUSCEPTIBILITY TO DISEASE AND ACCIDENTS

There is no doubt that with the British occupation of Varanasi, the

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increasing number of both permanent and temporary residents was detrimental to the overall health of the City. Congested areas were especially susceptible to epidemics of contagious diseases like small pox and cholera which would spread like wildfire. Records show that the City, in fact, fell victim to such epidemics a number of times during our period, including the years 1791, 1818, 1820, 1851, 1853, 1854, 1856 and again in 1857. These outbreaks cost many lives and caused many others to flee the City in fear.[4]

Accidental injuries were also commonplace. In the inner zone of the City, with its narrow and uneven lanes, the steady stream of residents and pilgrims, especially during important religious ceremonies, would lead to many accidents. During very special events like eclipses, these lanes would fill beyond capacity and the crush of jostling crowds would sometimes lead to stampedes.

In view of these circumstances, more extensive arrangements for the treatment of chronic, acute and tropical diseases and accidental injuries became an exigency. This justified the establishment of dispensaries and hospitals on modern lines in the City and the initiative of the Government and the public, in this regard, to supplement private treatment along traditional lines.

EXISTING SYSTEMS OF HEALING

Traditional Indian healthcare systems owe their origins to *Atharvaveda*, which deals with the treatment of disease through propitiatory rites (*svastyayana*), offerings (*bali*), auspicious oblations (*mangalahoma*), penance (*niyama*), purificatory rites (*prayashchitta*), fasting (*upavasa*), and incantations (*mantra*).

There were various healing methods in vogue during this period, to which ailing people of this and neighbouring areas resorted. Most important among these was faith-healing, which had enjoyed a long tradition in Varanasi. One primitive system of the faith-healing that had continued into this era was practised by the *sathias* who were occultists.[5] They would perform certain acts for curing patients.

Another method was to resort to holy men or to the deities for cures. Hindus commonly believed that it is not only the external or physical factors, but one's own *karma* resulting from sins committed in this and former lives, that were also responsible for all sorts of physical and mental ailments. It was also believed that by taking refuge in a holy man or deity and propitiating them with sincere prayer, worship, offerings, the drinking of holy water, or

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by bathing with such waters, sins would be washed away and suffering would cease and disease would be cured.

Besides the deity of Vishwanatha or the water of Ganga, there were other deities and other waters which were especially resorted to for the curing of diseases. The deities of *Shitala*, *Jwarahareshwara Shiva* and *Kala Bhairava* were worshipped for curing small pox, fever and afflictions caused by ghosts respectively. The serpent-deity was worshipped at *Nag Kuan* to get protection from snakebites. The waters of *Surya Kunda* and *Amrita Kupa* were used for curing leprosy and skin diseases respectively.

There were also people who believed that planets continuously influenced and guided the destiny of individual and collective lives and they are thus responsible for all sorts of psycho-physical well-being and suffering. Accordingly, ailing persons would rush to consult astrologers who would study the influence of the planets, identify the planets responsible for the suffering of their clients and then prescribe rituals to perform or stones, metals or jewels to wear to counteract the evil influences of planets. Thus, resorting to astrologers for the redress of suffering, both physical and mental, was common in Varanasi, a traditional seat of astrologers.

It has been laid down in the Hindu scriptures that *Shariram adyam khalu dharma sadhanam*, that is, a good physique is a pre-requisite for arduous spiritual practices. It was mainly the *Hatha Yogins* who invented various techniques of postures, breathing, etc. for keeping the body fit and enhancing longevity. Some such techniques were especially useful for curing certain diseases and these were known not only to the religious aspirants but also to those proficient in physical culture.

But the most important and popular of traditional healing was *Ayurvedic* treatment, which was at least three thousand years old and based on the results of thorough and in-depth research over the ages by experts in this line. *Ayurveda*, not only called the 'Science of Life' but the 'Life of Science,' is a holistic system of medicine, based on the study of the entire human being including body, organs, mind and soul, having eight specialized branches namely, internal medicine, treatment of organs in the head and neck, extraction of foreign bodies through surgery etc., management of conditions caused by natural and artificial poisons, treatment of psychic diseases caused by demonic possession, management of childhood ailments, administration of elixirs to maintain youth and prevent aging, and the administration of aphrodisiacs.[6]

This highly evolved, nature-oriented system of treatment, as honoured as the Vedas, showed miraculous results in treating both ordinary and

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complicated diseases. Practising Ayurvedic physicians, known as *vaidyas* or *kavirajas,* usually belonged to Brahmin or *Vaidya* castes and their profession was generally hereditary.

Varanasi was particularly associated with Ayurveda, as it was here that *Dhanwantari*, familiar in India as both the 'physician of the gods' and the 'Father of Indian Medical Science', was said to have been incarnated as king. He transmitted his medical knowledge to Sushruta, another legendary figure in the field of Ayurveda.[7] Moreover, some renowned works on Ayurveda like *Sushruta Samhita,* written by Sushruta, and the *Chikitsa Kaumudi* and *Chikitsa Darshan* were believed to have been written here. These and other facts strongly suggest that Varanasi had been a reputed centre of Ayurveda from the days of Vedic civilization down to the Modern Age, though some aspects of treatment, such as surgery, were discontinued later.

So far as our period is concerned, the Ayurvedic practitioners of Varanasi were either locally born or had migrated here from elsewhere, especially from Bengal, Punjab and South India.[8] We do not get any comprehensive list of the Vaidyas of the City, though the occasional name is found here and there. Among the celebrated Vaidyas of this place were Kalidas Gupta and Tryambak Shastri. Kalidas Gupta, a local Bengalee, lived here in the first half of the nineteenth century and Tryambak Shastri was the court-physician of the Kashi Naresh. We will see in Chapter XIII that Ayurveda was in the curriculum both in the private Sanskrit academies and also in the Government Sanskrit College of Varanasi. In fact Ayurveda was a favourite subject of study and the favoured method of treatment in this City. The popularity of this treatment is further substantiated by the fact that the ingredients of Ayurvedic medicines were among the common commodities of the local markets.*

When the Muslims conquered India in the Middle Ages they brought with them their system of treatment from Central Asia, which had been highly influenced by the Greek medical tradition, known as *Unani* or *Hakeemi.* This Islamic system of medicine was practised by Muslim physicians known as Hakims. During our period, Varanasi witnessed a number of such Muslim physicians, among whom the most celebrated were Muhummad Abdullah, who practised here in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and Muhammad Hadi, who, born in 1825, was the court-physician of the Raja of Varanasi.

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* See Chapter IX Appendix for a list of commodities in the price list.

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It was mainly due to the patronage of the common people that the traditional Hindu and Islamic systems of medicine survived here with a considerable following and continued till this period and even later.

But traditions of surgery on old lines, which had developed considerably in ancient India, had become almost lost. Consequently, physicians of both the Ayurvedic and Unani systems did not treat cases requiring surgery and such patients were generally treated by the experts belonging to the Hindu castes of barbers and sathias.[9]* These people, of course, performed only minor surgery.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

One of the most important factors in the prevention of disease is the use of clean water. But little attention was paid to purifying the stagnant and foul waters of the innumerable wells and tanks of the City. This, of course, was too difficult a task to initiate, as most of these water sources had religious associations and any attempt to prevent people from using them would have involved the risk of hurting the sentiment of the people who used these waters for drinking and bathing. Thus, the harmonization of religious and health considerations became a special problem of pilgrim-centres like Varanasi. The problem was further intensified by the presence of multitudes of pilgrims on special occasions like eclipses and *Shivaratri*. We have, however, already noted in Chapter X that it was the Committee for Local Improvement which, under the leadership of James Prinsep, had taken steps to fill in the Mandakini Tank, eliminating its completely unusable water. Though the exigency of habitats for the influx of settlers was one factor behind the filling of certain stagnant tanks, the filling of such tanks alone could not be the only solution to prevent people from using impure water in unplanned and overpopulated settlements. Rather, regular treatment of foul water in such tanks and wells would have been a more effective solution, but such steps were not taken.

It has been already recorded that epidemics of small pox and cholera broke out in the City a number of times; these sometimes ravaged the area with great ferocity owing to the prevailing circumstances described above. One of the most effective preventive measures against small pox to which Varanasi resorted was inoculation. A class of Brahmins, among whom there

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* It is interesting to note that 'For six centuries, the barbers of (Medieval) Europe practised surgery.... At the beginning of his career Ambroise Paré, one of the great pioneers of surgery, was among those who gave shaves and haircuts for a living....', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 3, pp. 148-49, 1963 edition.

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were also worshippers of Shitala, the divine consort of Lord Vishnu and the presiding deity of small pox, generally took up this profession of inoculation and thus played an effective role in countering this dreadful disease during this time.[10] Meanwhile, the Western system of vaccination was also introduced by the British Government in Varanasi, to which there were, of course, some initial objections. But these were gradually overcome and people generally accepted the introduction of vaccination in later years.

It is clear from these facts that medical treatment in Varanasi was individualistic and there was no system in place for treating large numbers of patients. The concept of public health as such, which presupposes the role and responsibility of an organized body to monitor the public health and the foundation of medical establishments as a corollary to that concept, were all lacking in Varanasi when the British arrived. Moreover, the City, like the whole of India at this time, had remained absolutely in the dark about the vast progress made in fields of medical science in the West.

DUNCAN OPENS A CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

It was Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident of Varanasi, who, recognizing the Government's responsibility in public health arranged free medical treatment for the people by a Muslim physician in 1787. This physician, Hakim Abdullah, was proficient in the Islamic system of medicine. The Hakim was also granted a *jageer* yielding Rs. 200 per month by Duncan on condition that he would open a dispensary for attending 'indigent and alien sick' people.[11] This arrangement for providing free medical treatment to the people worked well under the Hakim, but his successors seemed to have failed to render the same services, the details of which will be furnished later.

INTRODUCTION OF A WESTERN MEDICAL SYSTEM

Allopathy, the chief system of medicine in the West, had humble beginnings in Varanasi when it was officially instituted by the British Government for its soldiers through the appointment of a Civil Surgeon. Under this official arrangement, a British physician named Dr Balfour served as early as in 1783.[12] Later on, a Dr Campbell became Civil Surgeon, and with his transfer to the Presidency Division, Dr Robert Bruce succeeded him.[13] It may be noted that this Dr Campbell became a renowned physician in Calcutta and one of the big Calcutta hospitals was later named for him.*

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* This hospital has since been renamed Nilratan Sarkar College and Hospital.

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The Civil Surgeon of Varanasi was also required to supervise the health of the prisoners of the City jail.[14]

As in most of the other fields, the introduction of the European system of treatment and medicine could not be accomplished here without resistance, because people usually had reservations about anything foreign. In 1791 an epidemic broke out in the local jail and, consequently, many prisoners fell victim to it. But even though the British doctor was there to attend patients, the Brahmin prisoners objected to taking medicine from him.[15] A Brahmin Vaidya was finally appointed to solve this problem. Subsequently, the strong aversion of the people toward taking European medicines subsided and, with few exceptions, the local people gradually accepted it.[16]

THE BACKGROUND OF THE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Varanasi first witnessed the establishment of a Western-type hospital in 1811. The benefits of this hospital, called 'General Native Hospital' or 'General Hospital,' were not to be confined within the boundary of the City but to be extended to include the whole district under the Benares Division. This hospital was the precursor of the Prince of Wales Hospital, for which the foundation stone was laid by the Prince in 1877 during a visit to the City. When the new hospital buildings were completed in 1881, the old hospital was moved from its former site. This hospital, renamed 'King Edward Hospital' and, finally, 'Babu Shivaprasad Gupta Hospital', is now the main Government Hospital of Varanasi.

Following are excerpts from a letter enclosed with the prospectus for the General Native Hospital, dated March 13, 1811, sent to Lord Minto, the Governor-General-in-Council, by 'the principal part of the permanent European society' of the City explaining the exigency of such an establishment and the benefits to be derived therefrom, as well as furnishing information regarding necessary expenditures and possible sources of income to defray these costs.[17] These excerpts further show the deep concern of the local Europeans for this City, one of the positive features of the early British settlement not only here but throughout the country as a whole.[18] These excerpts are as follows:

> 'It is needless to expatiate on the good effects which may be confidently anticipated from such an Institution (Native Hospital and Dispensary). The similar foundations at Calcutta, Dacca, and Murshidabad are well known and justly appreciated whereby many lives of the poorer class of people are annually saved and the sight, shocking to humanity, of the dying and the dead is prevented....
>
> The City of Benares with exception perhaps of Calcutta is in extent and population

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much more considerable than any of the cities and if account be take of the confined situation of the streets, the number of crowded punts (path), dwellings (houses) and the greater and more prejudicial heat of climate at certain periods of the year, all of which tend to promote diseases, together with the height of the houses and narrowness of the thoroughfares which render accidents of limbs more frequent, there cannot be a doubt that such an Institution is particularly required at Benares....

We confidently expect the co-operation and contribution of a large portion of natives to this beneficial undertaking, very many of whom have professed their readiness to support it, and though we have thought it necessary to maintain the superiority of European control, it will be observed that the Institution is exclusively for the natives and that the native subscribers are admitted to the privileges of sending patients to the Hospital and have the means of acquiring an insight into the due appropriation of the funds. We beg leave as well on the part of the natives as for ourselves to solicit the patronage and liberality of Government towards this Institution in the same manner as they have humanely patronized and aided the Institutions above-mentioned. The expenses are adjusted on the most moderate scale, and will doubtless be managed with the utmost economy consistently with the object of enlarging the benefits of the Institutions in proportion to the state of funds....'[19]

The signatories to this letter also hoped that many persons in Calcutta and elsewhere would come forward 'in the cause of Humanity' if publicity be given to the plan, to which end they solicited that the accompanying advertisement in English and Persian be inserted in the Government Gazette.

The signatories also proposed that James Robinson, the Assistant Surgeon of Varanasi, be appointed to the position of Surgeon to the Hospital as his professional abilities had been 'eminently known and his humane care and attention to the indigent sick hitherto without remuneration and at personal cost had merited their acknowledgement and approbation to the Government.'[20]

The following, including such residents as the local Agent to the Governor-General, the Chaplain and the Magistrate of the City, were signatories to the letter: W. A. Brooke, Wm. T. Smith, W. Orton Salmon, Edward Watson, W. W. Bird, R. T. Glyn, L. Wiggins, T. Yeld, T. Wilford, J. Robinson, M. Ricketts, D. Thrilpland and D. Erskine.

THE HOSPITAL PROSPECTUS

The prospectus[21] for the establishment and management of the General Hospital, which has been placed in the Appendix, reveals some important facts. For instance, though the plan put European and Indian subscribers to the establishment on the same footing in most of the cases, distinctions were made between them in two vital issues, namely, only Europeans would be

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elected as Managers and, again, only European members would be eligible to attend the annual meeting of the Institution.

The following estimated expenditures were proposed :

ESTIMATE OF THE MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OF THF HOSPITAL[22]

Diet allowance for 50 in-patients at 1anna 6 pies each man per day	Rs.	140.00
Bazar medicines, cloth, paper, etc., etc.		50.00
1 Writer		20.00
1 *Lalla* (clerk)		6.00
2 Native medicine compounders of at Rs. 15/- each		30.00
1 *Choquedar* (Guard)		4.00
1 Peon		4.00
2 *Bhistees* at Rs. 4/- each (for supply of water)		8.00
2 *Mehters* Do (for cleaning)		8.00
2 *Dhobees* at Rs. 6/- each (for washing clothes)		12.00
Occasional expenses in stationery and repair		18.00
Salary of the Surgeon		100.00
Total	Rs.	400.00

THE HOSPITAL BECOMES A REALITY

The authority agreed to the proposal for the establishment of the General Hospital and directed the Collector of Benares to pay the Managers of the Hospital the sum of Sicca Rupees 150/- per month.[23] Subscriptions, given liberally, were also raised from different quarters.[24] Moreover, from 1814 onwards, a monthly income of Rs. 100/- was earned from a *jageer* once granted to the late Hakim Abdullah by Jonathan Duncan in 1787 in consequence of the following development.

In September 1813, an enquiry was lodged as to the state of a dispensary established by the late Hakim Abdullah, in accordance with the Resident's order for providing free medical treatment to poor and needy citizens. It was learned that though the Hakim's successor continued to receive the monthly Rs 200/- jageer, he had ceased to pay any attention to those for whom the dispensary was designed. Despite a request from the managers of the hospital to personally assist with the newly established hospital, the incumbent declined to do so. When this case was referred to the Government, it directed that one half of the jageer, or Rs. 100/-, be received monthly for hospital use and that the grantor should retain the other half and be free from personal service.[25]

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The hospital was situated in a house near the Old Mint,[26] which was rented from a local man at Rs. 45/- per month, but it was agreed that the building would be repaired by the proprietor. The dispensary, another unit of the hospital, was situated at a small bungalow attached to the Civil Surgeon's house at Secrole.

The more serious cases of the indigent were admitted as in-patients (indoor patients) and were supplied with food, blankets, servants and medical attendance. Others were simply furnished with advice and medicines at all hours of day and night. In-patients were chiefly accommodated at the hospital, but there were means of accommodating a few particular cases (e.g., after operations) at the dispensary near the Civil Surgeon's residence. Both of these establishments were visited by many patients after they were founded.[27] The first group of three managers of the hospital were W. A. Brooke, R. I. Glyn and F. Yeld.[28] In 1837, the establishment consisted of the following personel: 1 European surgeon, 1 Indian doctor, 3 compounders and dressers, 5 servants (cook, sweeper, *bhistee*, etc.), 1 writer, 1 peon, and 1 Indian doctor for the Secrole dispensary.[29] In addition to taking cases of general medicine, surgery cases were also accepted. It seems that both European and local systems of treatment were available at this establishment, which consisted of both a European surgeon and an Indian doctor, but emphasis was definitely on the European system of treatment.

SUPERINTENDENCE OF THE HOSPITAL

Initially (see Prospectus Article No. 2), the hospital was managed by three European Managers, duly elected according to rules of the Prospectus. This was changed later on to the effect that the hospital was brought under the control and supervision of a Committee appointed by the Government. This Committee would consist of five members, namely, the Agent to the Governor-General, the Magistrate, the Chaplain, the Civil Surgeon and Superintending Surgeon.[30] This Committee periodically inspected the hospital and submitted reports to the Government. One of the chief consequences of this change in arrangements was that the establishment, which had been democratic and private in nature, now assumed a purely official character. It is not clear why such a change was implemented by the Government.

The supervision of the details of the hospital was directly under the control of the Civil Surgeon, who was Secretary and Surgeon of the hospital and who also kept the accounts. The Superintending Surgeon used to visit the

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hospital once a week while the Magistrate and the Commissioner would only visit occasionally.[31]

MEDICAL TRAINING

It is interesting to note that long before the establishment of the Medical School in 1857 in Calcutta, capital of British India, and the imparting of medical education through that school, some medical training was given to interested pupils at Varanasi General Hospital. This may be inferred from the sixteenth paragraph of a letter from the City Magistrate and the Civil Surgeon on February 28, 1838, in reply to queries made by the Governor-General. The text of the paragraph in question is as follows:

> 'There is no fixed method adopted regarding the training class. Volunteer people frequently attend (the training class?) with a view to succeeding to vacancies as they occur in the public institution. It is understood that the Governor - General will sanction a small salary for subsistence to a few pupils which will ensure regularity of attendance and a degree of discipline which are essential to any decided improvement in the pupils.'[32]

We were unable to uncover further details about this medical education and training.

REPORTS OF THE HOSPITAL

Thanks to the founders of this medical establishment, though initiated in a humble way in 1811, it later developed into a significant institution rendering invaluable service to the suffering people of the City over a long period. This is evident from the abstracts of income, expense, the number of in-patients and out-patients and other necessary details of the hospital for the years 1812, 1826, 1837 and 1838,[33] which have been placed in the Appendix.

OBSERVATION ON THE REPORTS

Now, if we compare the number of patients admitted both in 1812 and in 1837 from the above mentioned reports, we find that within nearly two and a half decades since the establishment of the hospital, the number of patients more than doubled. This proves beyond doubt both the efficacy of founding a hospital and its growing popularity.

We also know from the report of 1837 that the number of out-patients was quite large in May, August and October, corresponding to summer, the rainy-season and autumn, when people usually fell ill in greater number. But with the coming of winter, as is evident from the reports of both 1812 and 1837, there were fewer cases of illness.

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While the average number of patients per month was 601, the average number of in-patients was about 34. It seems that the number of beds was around 38 in the in-patient section. Most of the patients treated in the hospital were cured and the death rate was remarkably low. It sounds almost unbelievable today that the meal expenses for each in-patient were only around Rs.2/- per month, that is, a little more than one anna per day. In consequence of the low costs in those days, the expense of running the hospital was also low. Finally, what was most remarkable about this hospital was that every service and assistance provided was given free of charge.

DETAILS OF DISEASES

Readers may be interested in learning the types of disease treated in the hospital and the number of patients treated for those diseases, as this information gives us an idea of the diseases prevalent in the City during this period. The following table gives such information for the years 1826 and 1838.[34]

TABLE – 1

Nature of disease	Number of Patients in 1826	& 1838
Ophthalmia (eye infections)	201	142
Ulcers	x	840
Apoplexy (cerebral haemorrhage) and Palsy	193	x
Asthmatic condition	209	109
Anomalous cases—disordered limbs etc.	503	216
Amaurosia (blindness)	92	x
Epilepsy	x	31
Wounds & accidents	807	231
Cholera	146	30
Cough/consumption (tuberculosis)	201	x
Cutaneous disease (skin)	356	61
Contact (venereal diseases)	141	x
Tumors	242	63
Dysentery diarrhoea	293	432
Dyspepsia	397	330
Dropsy	162	90
Paralysis, Nerves, etc.	102	x
Pulmonary complaints	162	x
Fractures & Dislocations	x	116
Fevers	492	428
Vernal (through insects)	341	502

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Rheumatic affection	543	974
Liver consumption	52	80
Leprosy	79	913
Bladder & urinary passages	279	330
Stone in bladder	x	5
Scrofula	162	205
Spleen complaints	342	x
Small Pox	x	8
Hemorrhoids (piles) and fistula	191	202
Hydrocele	x	56

The gaps in cases do not necessarily mean that there were no such cases of the disease in Varanasi that year, rather, presumably, patients suffering from such diseases simply did not report to the hospital for a cure.

It is difficult to say with any certainty what diseases were prevalent in Varanasi on the basis of the data provided in only one or two years. Again, there must have been many more cases that were not brought to the hospital. Diagnosis of diseases in those days was also not as scientific and as extensive as it is today. Nevertheless, the table shows that there were a good number of cases of both minor and serious diseases that were treated in the hospital. There were many cholera cases in 1812 but few in 1838. On more than one occasion, as has been pointed out, cholera and small pox, especially cholera, broke out as epidemics taking a great toll on lives of Varanasi's residents. For instance, a cholera epidemic erupted in Jagat Ganj in 1852[35] and in Bengali Tola in 1853,and again in 1857.[36] During such outbreaks, additional Indian doctors were appointed to the hospital to help deal with the situation.[37]

Diseases that are generally caused from food and drink, like dysentery and cholera, and climatic diseases, like cutaneous (skin) and rheumatic diseases, were prevalent in the City; as was leprosy. But one should note that leprosy was not a common disease of the place and that most people suffering from leprosy here had come into the City from outside. Neurological cases were also high in number. Cases of ulcers were considerable, but it is difficult to say more regarding this disease because of a want of data regarding the nature and causes of hospital cases. Wounds from accidents, common in a crowded and congested city, were also common in Varanasi where, as mentioned before, the streets and lanes were especially narrow. Comparatively, lung complaints, like asthma and coughs related to tuberculosis, usually caused from polluted air and under-nourishment, were fewer in number. Cases of malaria were also not so numerous. Complaints

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of the spleen were more frequent than those of the liver. Urinary tract and rectum ailments were neither exceptionally high nor low, as was the case with complaints of dropsy, ophthalmia, amaurosis and pulmonary disease. The cases of hydrocele were few. The City was not free from venereal diseases, which were common in every city.

It appears from the study of this table of diseases that the citizens of Varanasi at that time were almost free from psychosomatic diseases, such as stomach ulcers, high blood pressure, cardiac and brain complaints, which are generally caused by stress and strain.

Finally, though there were cases of tumors, it is not known whether these were benign or malignant. But it is almost certain that the number of patients suffering from cancers in those days was far fewer than what we experience today.

Treatment was not limited to drugs alone and surgical operations were presumably in vogue as well. Though we do not know the details, there is at least one reference to the successful completion of a critical Caesarean operation performed by a Dr Nabin Chandra Pal, the sub-Assistant Surgeon of City, as early as 1851.[38]

OTHER DISPENSARIES

The Government also opened one dispensary near the police station at Chowk, which was amalgamated with the Prince of Wales Hospital later on.[39]

Another general public dispensary was started around 1845 at the house of the Maharaja of Vizianagaram with the financial support of the Maharani (queen) of that state. The Government took the responsibility for this dispensary in 1854 but the Maharani continued to pay an annual subsidy for its maintenance.[40]

Around 1850, a dispensary endowed by Raja Deo Narain Singh was started in Ausan Ganj and was also later on amalgamated with the Prince of Wales Hospital.[41]

PROPOSAL FOR A BLIND ASYLUM

Thanks to the liberal endowment of Kalishankar Ghoshal, a Blind Asylum was set up near the General Hospital in 1826.[42] Kalishankar was the worthy son of Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal, an aristocrat of Calcutta, who had migrated to this City in later life and became a man of repute here. The circumstances which led to the establishment of the Blind Asylum and the estimates and plans for the management of the asylum are given below.

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It is reported that when Kalishankar had arrived in Varanasi, he took notice of the unhappy condition of the blind people here. Through inquiries he learned that there were not less than 250 blind people earning a livelihood by asking for alms in the streets of the City and he was informed that many of them, in passing through the narrow and crowded lanes, suffered serious injuries[43] and even fatal accidents.[44]

Kalishankar, being anxious to relieve their distress, formed a plan for establishing an asylum for them in 1825 in the hope that Government would lend its support and that the example of the Government would be followed by other generous individuals. He made the following estimate of the expenses to be incurred in building and maintaining an asylum, in which 250 blind people could be cared for :

1.	Purchase of ground and erection of house	Rs. 10,000.00	
2a.	Monthly Wages : 1 *Darogah*	Rs.	10.00
	1 Deputy Darogah	"	5.00
	1 Native doctor	"	10.00
	8 Mehters (sweepers)	@ 3 Rs. each	24.00
	10 Cooks	@ 4 Rs. each	40.00
	6 Bhistees (water carriers)	@ 4 Rs. each	24.00
	3 Dhobees (washermen)	@ 3 Rs. each	9.00
	1 Head female servant	Rs.	6.00
	2 Mehtranees (female-sweepers)	@ 3 Rs. each	6.00
	3 Barbers	@ 3 Rs. each	9.00
	Subtotal of servants' wages	Rs.	143.00
b.	Monthly diet and other expenses for 250 blind persons	@ 3 Rs. each	750.00
	Total expenses per month	Rs.	893.00

Of this total expenditure, Kalishankar was willing to give Rs. 10,000 towards the first expense of the building and Rs. 200 per month towards the monthly expenses. With respect to the management of the institution, he expressed his wish that it should be under the direction of a committee consisting of the following persons: The Senior Judge of the Courts of Appeal, the Magistrate of the City, the Civil Surgeon at Secrole or his Assistant, and the Chaplain resident at Secrole.

Kalishankar submitted further that he would leave to the committee the purchasing of the ground, constructing the buildings, superintending the

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management of the asylum, and the framing of such rules as might appear to them to be conducive to the good order and welfare of the institution. He also proposed that the medical charges of the asylum should be committed to the Assistant Surgeon at Secrole, who would be expected to provide his services gratuitously. In accordance with the custom of the day regarding casteism, Kalishankar also suggested to the committee the necessity of making provision, as far as possible, for the accommodation of people of different religion and castes, 'without incurring the danger of mutual interference and offence'.

Having submitted this statement to the Governor-General, he made an earnest request that Government assistance be speedily granted and that the persons named as members of the committee be duly authorized to commence operations of an asylum as early as possible.[45]

Kalishankar also proposed to place Rs. 48,000/- in the hands of the Government for the purpose of this project, which was to pay 5 per cent interest in perpetuity or Rs. 200/- monthly for its support. He also wanted to donate a house in Secrole, valued at Rs. 10,000/-, which was usually rented at Rs. 100/- per month, for this purpose.[46]

It is evident that the proposed management of the asylum was made along the lines of the management of the General Hospital that had already been established in the City.

THE BLIND ASYLUM ESTABLISHED

The Government accepted Kalishankar's proposal for this blind asylum and decided to pay Rs. 90/- towards the monthly salary of the Superintendent. It also appointed the following persons as members of the management committee of the asylum as Kalishankar had suggested; the Senior Judge of the Provincial Court of Appeal & Circuit, the Deputy Magistrate, the Chaplain and the Civil Surgeon at Varanasi. The Government also accepted a laudable offer from Dr Watson, the Assistant Civil Surgeon, to provide medical help to the inmates of the asylum.[47]

Most probably, the asylum was opened on Monday, January 2, 1826, with 10 inmates.[48] First housed in the Old Mint, the asylum was moved in 1852 to its new site in Hukul Ganj, where it is situated today. The premises afforded excellent and roomy accommodation for the patients and their attendants. The inmates of the asylum were fed and clothed and given medical attention. It was contiguous to the General Hospital, and both institutions were benefited in many ways by their proximity. Medical help was offered by the Assistant Civil Surgeon, and later on by the Civil Surgeon and one

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Indian doctor as well. Afterwards, the asylum and the Hospital were brought under the control of one Committee appointed by the Government consisting of the Governor-General's Agent, the Magistrate, the Collector, the Superintending Surgeon, the Chaplain and the Civil Surgeon. This Committee would inspect both of these establishments and submit reports to the Government and the responsibility for keeping accounts of the asylum lay with the Magistrate's Office.[49]

The following is an abstract of the number of patients and the amount of the expenses and income of the Blind Asylum for the year 1837.

TABLE-1

Month	Patient Average	Monthly Expense	Monthly Income
January	105	Rs. 427-14-6	Rs. 441-4-2
February	106	350-15-3	448-1-6
March	104	340-7-3	340-7-6(?)
April	95	338-7-9	490-0-0
May	93	924-0-0	394-0-9
June	97	390-13-9	394-0-9
July	107	540-7-0	294-0-9
August	103	516-15-11	588-1-6
September	106	464- 1-6	294-0-9
October	104	480-10-9	394-0-9
November	107	814-7-9	494-0-9
December	102	434-9-3	394-0-9
Totals for 1837 :	1229	Rs. 6023-14-8	Rs. 4966-3-11

Asylum expenses exceeded income in 1837 by Rs.1057-10-9, which absorbed a balance from the former year of Rs. 841-7-0 1/2 and left a deficit of Rs. 216-3-8 1/2. The high expenditure in 1837 was due to an increase in inmates, higher prices for food, repairs to house belonging to the institution, and finally, to defending a law-suit regarding the house. But in the next year and onwards most of these extra expenses did not recur.

TABLE 2

Monthly Staff Salaries (borne by the charitable fund) in Rupees

1 *Jamadar*		10.00
1 *Naeb*		5.00
2 Cooks	@ Rs. 5.00	10.00
2 *Chaprasis*	@ Rs. 4.00	8.00
1 Native doctor		10.00

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2 Mussulman cook-mates	@ Rs. 4.00	8.00
2 Sweepers		7.00
20 Coolies		6.00
3 Water carriers	@ Rs. 4.00	12.00
3 Female servants	@ Rs. 4.00	12.00
	Total :	88.00 [50]

It goes without saying that Kalishankar Ghoshal revealed his public spirit and piety by establishing this asylum, which was unique not only in Varanasi, but possibly in the whole of North India. Kalishankar also showed his wisdom by involving the Government in its operations and also in entrusting the asylum's administration to a powerful body. Thus, this asylum became the refuge for a considerable number of helpless blind persons who were rescued from their limitless suffering.

THE LUNATIC ASYLUM

Another asylum meant for the mentally ill was founded in the City by the Government in 1812.[51] The Lunatic Asylum was one of three similar institutions–the other two being situated at Berilly and Delhi.[52] Francis Egerton visited the Benares Lunatic Asylum on February 11, 1852, leaving the following account:

> 'Business over, we went to see the Lunatic Asylum and the gaol (jail). Both are widely different in their construction from similar buildings in England, of course, but the principle of conduct in both is the same ... the patients (the Asylum) are treated with utmost possible absence of personal restraint. The Doctor, who was kind enough to show us over both, seems to have considerable influence over his patients, and although he has only been at the Asylum eighteen months, managed to do away in a great manner with the use of chains. But one has chains of any weight, and he only, because he murdered a keeper, a European, not long ago. None are even chained to any one spot and only one or two have irons at all. I believe the doctor hopes eventually to get rid of irons altogether. There were not a few murderers among the insane, one of whom, who had murdered his mother, has an immense affection for a black cat. The doctor attributed most of the cases to be an immoderate use of opium and 'bang' (bhang—a narcotic). The cells are all on a ground floor, surrounding paved courts, with wells in the centre for their ablutions, each court constituting a kind of ward, and each cell closed, if necessary, with iron gates. They had about one hundred patients including fifteen women.'[53]

Further improvement upon this Asylum was being considered on an official basis. In 1856, *The Calcutta Journal*, a Calcutta monthly, also wrote that a plan for a Lunatic Asylum based on the principle of making the Asylum as little different as possible in appearance from the houses of patients, had

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been formulated and adopted by the Government, according to an original plan of Willams, the Magistrate of Berilly, for a new Benares Asylum.[54] Moreover, a special Government grant of Rs. 2258-2-9 was spent for the construction of two barracks for this lunatic asylum in 1856 and four more barracks remained to be built.[55]

THE LEPER ASYLUM

As is evident from the abstract of diseases for the year 1838, the number of patients suffering from leprosy and treated at the General Hospital was as high as 913. But the actual number of lepers living in the City must have been far greater. Lepers, being generally forsaken by relatives and despised by society, flocked to Varanasi in large numbers.

Subsistence through alms was much easier in Varanasi as Hindus believe that giving alms to indigent, diseased and disabled persons, especially in a pilgrim centre like Varanasi counts as a specially meritorious act. Such beliefs induced people to give alms liberally in Varanasi and similar motives may have caused lepers to take shelter in Varanasi. Some of them may have also thought that sins, which were believed to be the cause of their ignominious disease, would be cleansed and they would get liberation by staying and dying in Varanasi. Presumably, these are the circumstances that led to the influx of the lepers into Varanasi.

Nevertheless, from the point of public health it was considered urgent to seclude lepers from the people, and to make special arrangements for their treatment and accommodation that would not be possible in a general hospital. With this end in view, the Leper Asylum was opened near or in the campus of Blind Asylum, supervised by the same Committee. Later on, the construction of new Leper Asylum Ward was completed by 1857.[56] Gurudas Mitra, a Bengalee aristocrat of the City, built a handsome well from his private purse for the use of the lepers here.[57]

VARANASI'S MEDICAL FACILITIES—A FIRST IN PUBLIC HEALTH

The short accounts of the General Hospital, Blind Asylum, Lunatic Asylum and Leper Asylum of Varanasi, as given above, establish that Varanasi occupied a pioneering position among other Indian cities in providing both general and special medical services to common people along modern lines. This was made possible through the collaboration of the local European and Indian communities and the Government.

While the Allopathic system of medicine was introduced and made

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popular by a large establishment like the General Hospital, Homoeopathy, also a Western system of medicine, experienced rather humble growth. Loknath Maitra, a Bengalee resident of the City, introduced and popularized Homoeopathic medicine in Varanasi around 1850 and treatment by Dr Maitra was favoured by none other than District Judge J. B. Ironside.[58]

We have already noted that there were famous practitioners of traditional systems of treatment here. Thus, by the end of the period under review (the 1860s), Varanasi had witnessed different systems of Eastern and Western medicine and treatment, Ayurvedic, Islamic, Allopathic and Homoeopathic, all working simultaneously. This provided the people with the opportunity for variety of choices in treatments, later leading to a mutual harmony that paved the way for a 'mixed system of treatment' combining mainly Ayurvedic and Allopathic systems.

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APPENDIX - A

TABLE - I

Abstract of Monthly Expenditures and Numbers of (Indoor & Outdoor) Patients for Six Months from July to December 1812

Month	Cured	Relieved	Dead	Total	Whole expenditure in diet, salary, etc. Rs.	As.	P.
July	265	122	3	390	257	8	0
August	194	95	4	293	261	0	0
September	196	97	5	298	251	0	0
October	231	101	0	332	256	0	0
November	129	76	5	210	254	0	0
December	90	54	3	147	261	8	0
	Grand Total : 1670 persons				Total = Rs. 1540	8	0

N. B. The average amount of the monthly expenditure was Rupees 256, of which Rupees 97 were spent for diet and other necessaries exclusively for the Home (Indoor) patients. The remainder of Rs. 159 was the average sum spent each month for the salaries of the surgeon and other medical attendants including Bazar medicines, etc., required for the patients.

TABLE - II

STATEMENT OF 1826

(A) ABSTRACT OF NOs OF PATIENTS

Patients (Indoor and Outdoor) arrived, relieved, etc.		6268
Patient (Indoor and Outdoor) died		62
	Total :	6330
Home (Indoor) patients under cure	-	27
Out (Outdoor) patients	-	47
	Total :	74
Total Home (Indoor) patients	-	562
Total Out (Outdoor) patients	-	5842
	Total :	6404

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(B) STATEMENT OF THE FUNDS OF THE NATIVE GENERAL HOSPITAL AND OF THE BENEFITS RECEIVED FROM 1st JANUARY TO 31st DECEMBER,1826

Balance this day ...	Rs. 361-15-4	Received from January 1st to Dec. 31st -	Rs. 4461-4-x
Disbursements from 1st Jan. to 31st Dec. —1826	Rs. 4584-7-7	By Balance from previous year	Rs. 485-2-11
Total :	Rs. 4946-6-11	Total :	Rs. 4946-6-11

Amount of Stock belonging to the Institution	Rs. 10400-x-x
Cash in the Treasury/ Companies' subscription & Resumed Jageer	Rs. 1213-8-1
Do in the hands of Mr Celvin and some others, etc.	Rs. 17500-5-0
Total :	Rs. 29113-13-1
Deduct Hospital rent due for the year & salary of servants for December	Rs. 815-0-0
Balance in favour of Institution	Total : Rs. 28,298-13-1

TABLE - III

STATEMENT OF 1837

(A) DETAILS OF ANNUAL INCOME FROM THE PROPERTY IN 1837

1. There was a sum of Rs. 23,635 invested in Government Securities in deposit with the Government agents, the interest of which amounted annually to	Rs. 1009-12-x
2. A house in Secrole valued at Rs.10,000 rented to the Civil Surgeon for Rs.60 per month or year	Rs. 720-x-x
3. Resumed Jageer from the successor of Hakim Abdullah—Rs. 100, monthly or annually	Rs. 1200-x-x
4. Subscription by the Court of Directors from Sept. 1813, monthly Rs. 156-12-x or annually—	Rs. 1881-x-x
Total :	Rs. 4810-12-x

(B) ABSTRACT OF MONTH WISE INCOME EXPENSES AND NUMBER OF INDOOR & OUTDOOR PATIENTS

Month	Monthly income in Rupees	Average of Home (indoor) patients	Monthly no. of out (out-door)patients	Expense for medicine in Rupees	Expense for house rent in Rupees	Expense for dieting expenses	Salary to Surgeons & Servants (in Rupees)	Total Expenses (in Rupees)
January	358-14-0	32¼	540	36-15-0	45-0-0	61-10-0	232-0-0	375-09-0
February	206-14-6	32	685	29-05-0	45-0-0	58-09-6	232-0-0	364-14-6
March	60-00-0	30¼	640	25-14-0	45-0-0	57-02-0	232-0-0	360-00-0
April	260-00-0	30³/₁	620	27-04-0	45-0-0	56-13-6	232-0-0	361-01-6
May	689-00-0	33¼	708	21-01-0	45-0-0	64-01-6	232-0-0	362-02-6
June	60-00-0	34¾	457	25-10-6	45-0-0	65-03-0	232-0-0	367-13-6
July	635-10-0	40	480	29-07-0	45-0-0	78-10-0	232-0-0	385-01-0
August	465-07-9	38¾	725	26-15-0	45-0-0	77-10-0	232-0-0	380-09-0*
September	577-02-5	32¾	482	26-03-6	45-0-0	68-01-6	232-0-0	371-05-0
October	560-00-0	38½	725	26-06-0	45-0-0	75-04-6	232-0-0	378-10-6
November	779-00-0	33½	541	30-01-0	45-0-0	60-08-0	232-0-0	377-09-0*
December	465-07-9	38½	609	32-0-0	45-0-0	77-5-0	232-0-0	386-05-0

Total : Rs. 5117-08-5 Total : 7212 Total : Rs. 4471-10-6

Adding sums due Rs. 1429-00-0

Adding extra : ground rent, markets, postage, repairs of bungalow : Rs. 186-04-6

Grand Total : Rs. 6546-8-5 Grand Total : Rs. 4657-15-0

* It seems that though the total is correct but the item-wise figures do not tally.

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(C) The Salary of the staff

1	Surgeon	Rs.	150
1	Native doctor	Rs.	20
1	Compounder	Rs.	10
1	Bhistee, 1 Cook		?
1	Sweeper	Rs.	12
1	Dresser (?)	Rs.	8
1	Native doctor for Dispensary	Rs.	12
1	Writer	Rs.	16
1	Peon	Rs.	4
	Total :	Rs.	232

N.B. Some arrears of private subscriptions were paid in 1832. Hence there was a considerable excess of income over expenditure.

TABLE - IV

STATEMENT OF 1838

ABSTRACT OF ANNUAL INCOME EXPENDITURE AND NOs. OF PATIENTS

(A) ACCOUNTS

Total Income	Rs. 6304 - 11 - 1
Total Disbursement	Rs. 5761 - 10 - 8
Total Balance	Rs. 543 - 00 - 5

(B) NOS. OF PATIENTS

Home (Indoor) patients	552
Out (Outdoor) patients	6,494
Grand Total :	7,046

(C) DETAILS OF THE PATIENTS

Patients cured and relieved	6,800	
died	101	
Total :		6,901
House (Indoor) patients under cure	44	
Out (Outdoor) patients	101	
		145
Grand Total :		7,046

When the following abstract of monthly expenditures and number of patients of the establishment during July—December 1812 is juxtaposed with the above abstracts, etc. of 1837 – 1838, the expansion of the Hospital within a few years becomes quite evident.

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APPENDIX - B

PROSPECTUS OF THE GENERAL NATIVE HOSPITAL

Articles 1st : That all persons making a donation of Rs. 800 or upwards to the Funds of the Institution shall be declared Founders of the same and have their names engraved in the walls of the building.

2nd : That the general management of the Institution be conducted by three European subscribers, to be drawn by Ballot, who shall hold their situation for a year and three native subscribers making a donation of Rs. 800 or upwards, shall also be drawn by Ballot and be admitted to inspect the General Account and concerns.

3rd : Should any of the gentlemen balloted decline to act for the time being another Manager shall be balloted for. The Manager of the preceding year shall be excluded from the Ballot of the succeeding one.

4th : That all persons subscribing Rs. 100 Donation shall be entitled to the admission of 1 out-patient continually.

5th : That all persons subscribing Rs. 200 Donation shall be entitled to admit 2 out-patients continually.

6th : That all persons subscribing Rs.300 Donation be entitled to admit 1 in-patient and 2 out-patients continually.

7th : That all persons subscribing Rs. 500 be entitled to admit 2 in-patients 2 out-patients continually.

8th : That all persons subscribing Rs. 800 donation or upwards be entitled to admit 3 in-patients and an unlimited number of out-patients continually.

9th : That all persons subscribing Rs. 6 monthly be entitled to admit 2 out-patients and for every additional sum of Rs. 3 which they may subscribe they shall be entitled to admit an additional out-patient.

10th : All monthly subscriptions shall be paid 1 month in advance.

11th : That all persons subscribing Rs. 10 per month and paying 6 months in advance shall during that period be entitled to admit 1 in-patient and 2 out-patients.

12th : That all descriptions of Natives unable to provide European medical relief for themselves, as persons meeting with accidents requiring surgical aid, be considered proper objects for the benefits of the Hospital and be admitted thereto, on bringing to the Surgeon a recommendation signed by a competent subscriber.

13th : That upon their discharge they shall take a notice thereof signed

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by the Surgeon to the subscriber who recommended them, who will then be at liberty and supply their place with another object of charity.

14th : That the Managers extend the benefits of the Hospital to persons requiring medical and surgical assistance, in such manner as they may hereafter judge proper according to the state of the fund of the Institution.

15th : That a Banking House of credit and respectability be chosen by the European subscribers to hold the office of Treasurer to the Institution and that the funds be vested in Government Security in the names of the Managers for the time being in Trust for the Institution.

16th : That no payment of money be made by the Treasurer but by a written authority signed by two of the aforesaid European Managers.

17th : That a meeting of Managers be held monthly or oftener if they deem it necessary for the purpose of conducting the concerns of the Institution, and that they shall have the power of calling a special meeting of subscribers whenever they may think it requisite.

18th : That a meeting of the European subscribers be held annually to receive and examine the accounts of the Institution, to report to Government the benefits resulting therefrom and the state of the funds, also to communicate the same to the Native subscribers, and for such other purposes as may then appear necessary, at which time the annual ballot noticed in article 2nd will take place.

19th : That the medical and surgical attendant be one in the service of the Honourable East India Company and resident at Benares.

20th : That the servants of the Hospital domestic as well as medical be appointed by and placed under the orders of the Surgeon who shall direct the interior management of the House, subject to the control of the Managers.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Walter Hamilton, *Geographical, Statistical and Historical Description of Hindustan*, Vol. I, p. 305.
2. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I.
3. Rev. William Tennant, *Indian Recreations*, Vol. II, p. 178.
4. Jadunath Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, p. 45 and pp. 456-57; *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, Letters issued and received, Register 8, p. 459; Op. cit., *Kashivartaprakashika*, p. 46.
5. See List of Professions, Chapter IX, Appendix.
6. Article by S. S. Janki in *Encyclopedia of Indian Literature*, Sahitya Akademi [New Delhi], Vol. I, 1997, p. 311.
7. Kubernath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, pp. 93-94.
8. Acharya Priyavrata Sharma, *Varanasi me Ayurved ka Sudirgha Parampara* : *Sanmarg*, *Varanasi Visheshank*, pp. 85-88.
9. See List of Professions, Chapter IX, Appendix; David Arnold, *The Ecology and Cosmology of Disease in the Banaras Region: Sandria*, B. Freitag, ed., *Culture and Power in Banaras*, p. 259 ff.
10. *Ibid.*
11. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 9, Vol. 53, p. 122.
12. COV., Miscellaneous Letters Series I, Basta No. 44, Book 6A, pp. 66 & 69.
13. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 2, Vol. II, p. 36.
14. Duncan Records, Basta 8, Sl. No. 46, pp. 9-21, 1792.
15. Duncan Records, Basta 9, Vol. 53, p. 122.
16. *Ibid.*, 29 March, Vol. 128 (2), No. 131, pp. 29-31.
17. COV., Basta No. 131, Sl. No. 128 (2), pp. 3-19.
18. R. C. Mazumdar, ed., *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. X, Part II, pp. 14-15, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
19. COV., Basta No. 131, Sl. 128 (2), pp. 3-19.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-20.
25. *Ibid.*, (Appendix C), p.122.
26. COV., Basta No. 131, Sl. No. 128 (2), pp. 116-20.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Revenue Dept., Vol. No. 563, Sl. No. 43, pp. 240- 41 (Copy of the letter).
29. COV., Basta No. 131 (Appendix B).
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-41.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-20.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 116-21 & pp. 138-41; *Home Public Proceedings*, 15 March 1827, No. 31, pp. 150-51.
34. *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, Letters issued and received, Reg. No. 8, p. 459.

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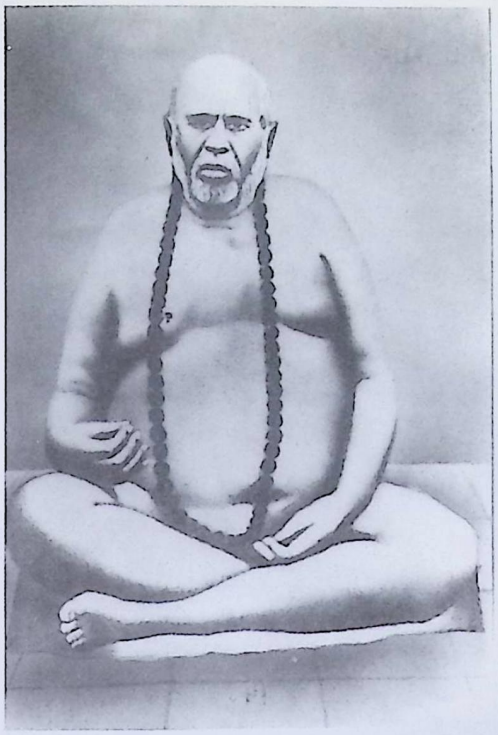
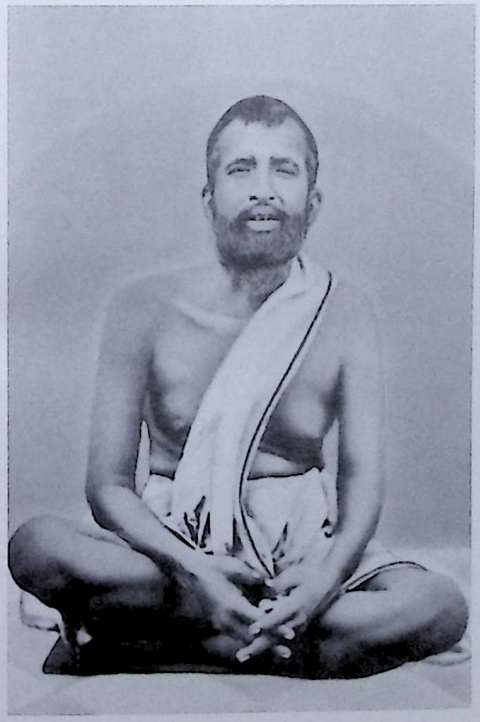
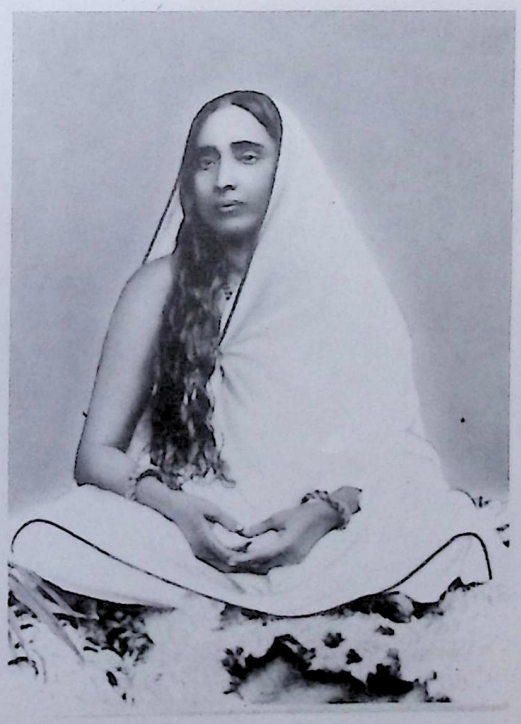


23. Trailanga Swami

24. Image of Goddess Kali installed by Trailanga Swami



25. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa



26. Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi

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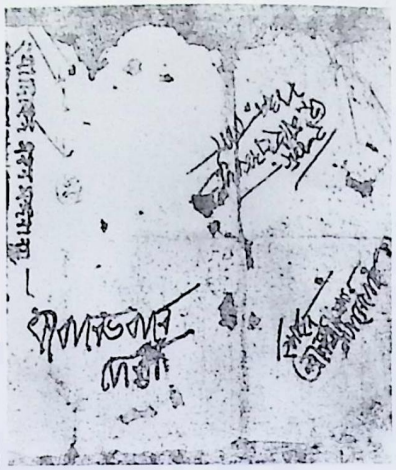
27. Rani Bhavani Temple



28. Signature of Rani Bhavani in Bengali

29. Maharani Ahalya Bai

30. Maharaja Ranjit Singh

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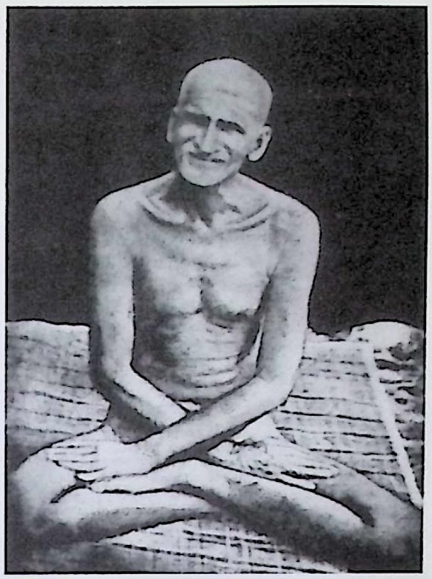
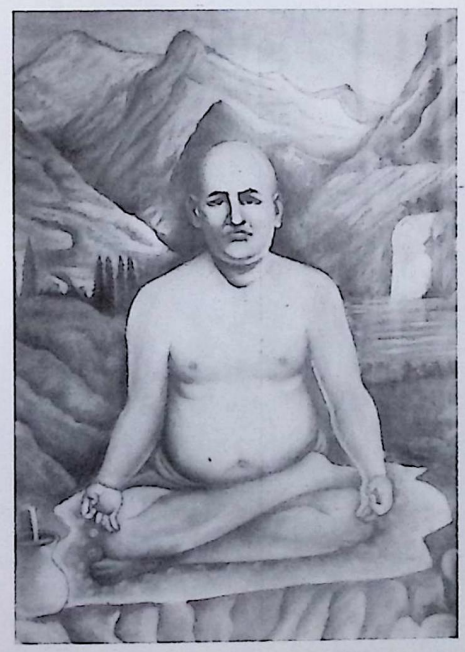
31. Kashthajihva Swami instructing the Maharaja of Varanasi



32. Swami Bhaskarananda Saraswati



33. Swami Dayananda Saraswati

34. Place of Shastrartha between the Pandits of Varanasi & Swami Dayananda

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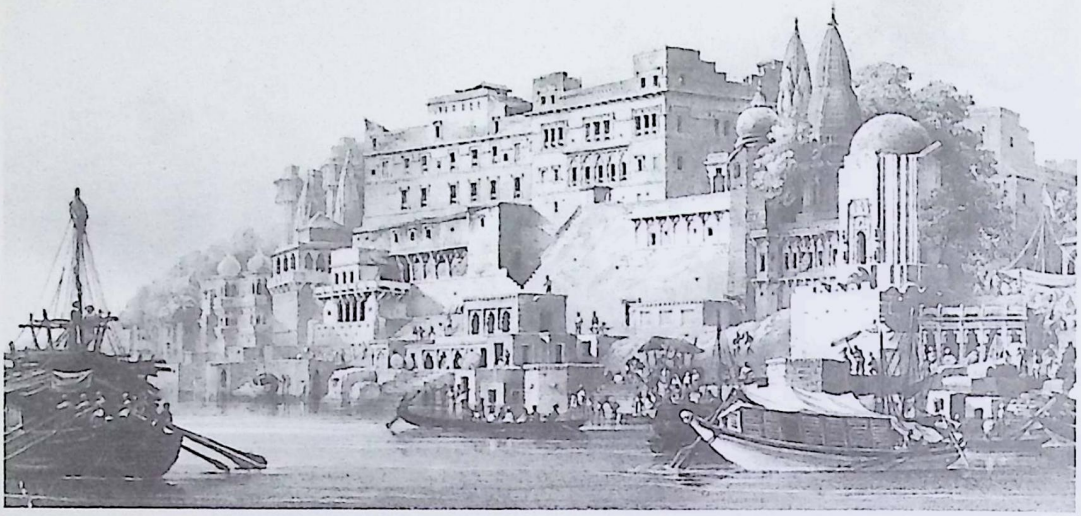

35. Dashashwamedh Ghat : James Prinsep, 1831

36. Manikarnika Ghat (Charana Paduka) :
James Prinsep, 1831

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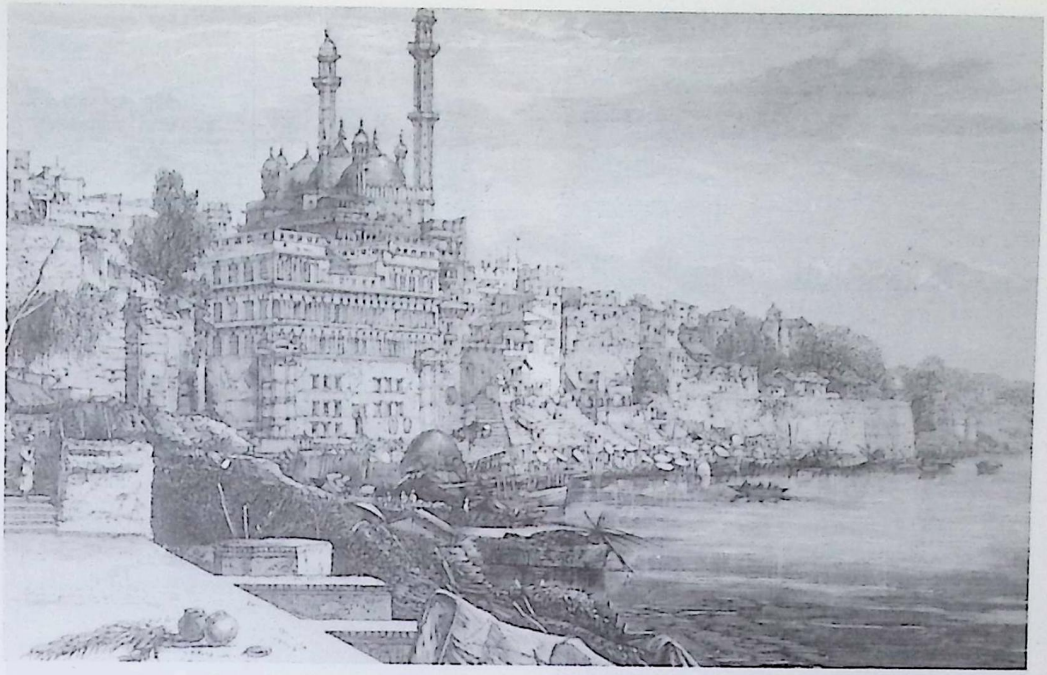

37. Pancha Ganga Ghat, also showing Aurangzeb Mosque with its tall minarets, formerly Bindumadhava Temple : James Prinsep, 1831

38. Mandakini Talao : James Prinsep, 1822

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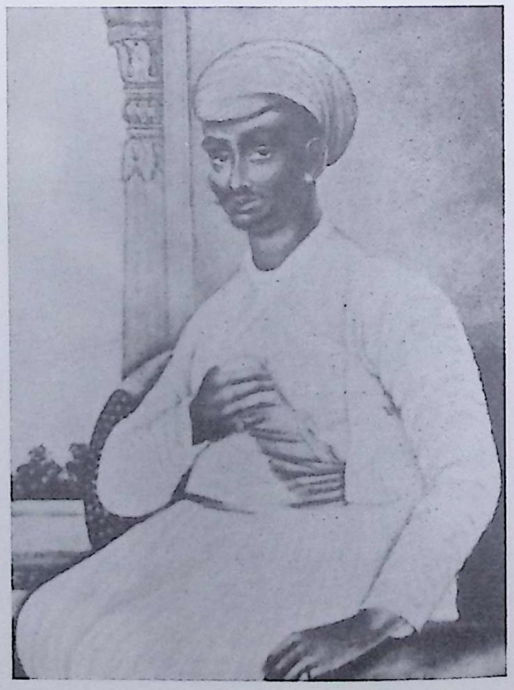
39. Manasaram

40. Maharaja Balwant Singh

41. Maharaja Chet Singh



42. Maharaja Mahipnarain Singh

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43. Maharaja Uditnarain Singh

44. Maharaja Ishwariprasadnarain Singh

45. Prasiddhanarain Singh

46. Gowal Das Sahu

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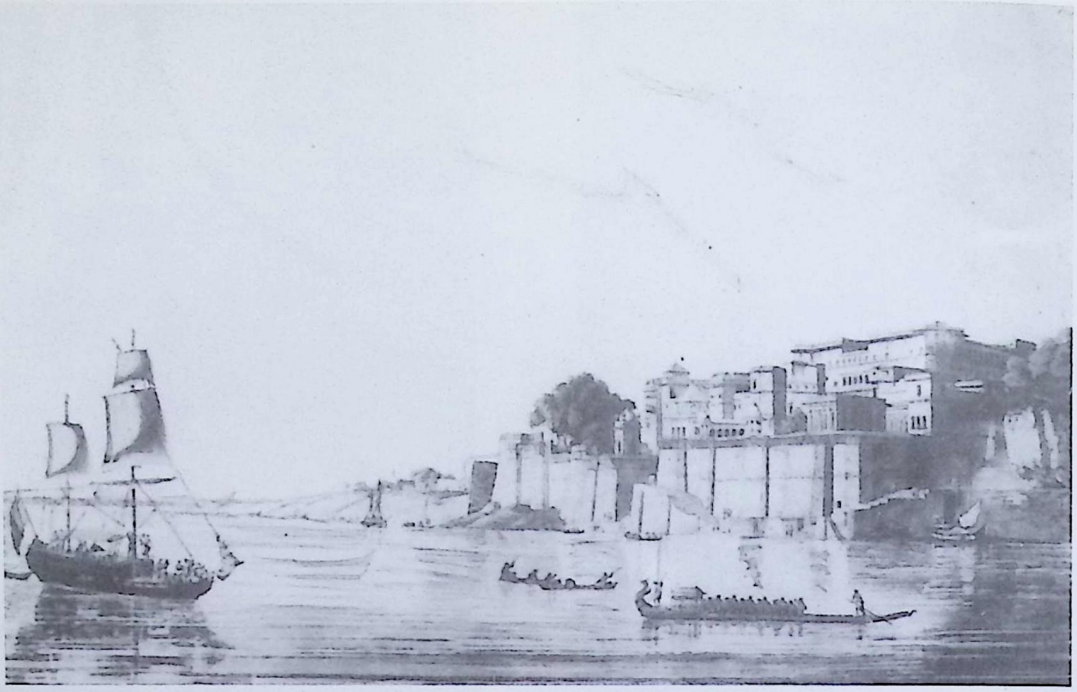
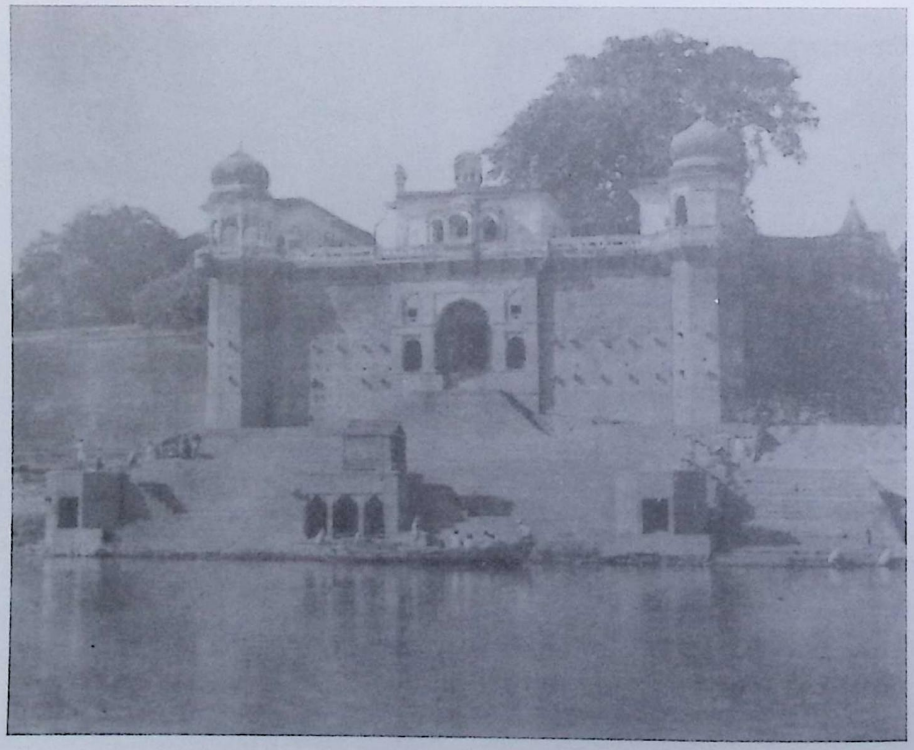


47. Ramnagar Fort Palace : Thomas Daniell, 1796



48. Shivala Fort Palace (Chet Singh Ghat)

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35. Op. cit., *Kashivartaprakashika,* 15 August 1851.
36. Sarvadhikari, *Tirthabhraman*, p. 45 & pp. 456-57.
37. *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, Letters issued and received, Reg. No. 8, p. 459.
38. Op.cit., *Kashivartaprakashika*,14 December 1851.
39. An Old Resident, *All About Benares*, pp.142-43, K. S. Muthiah & Co.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*
42. COV., Basta No. 131, Sl. No. 128 (2), pp. 116-20.
43. *Home Public*, No. 18, 5 May 1825.
44. *Ibid.*, Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. II, p. 373.
45. *Home Public,* No. 18, 5 May 1825.
46. COV., Duncan Records, 28 February 1838, pp. 116-20.
47. *Home Public,* No. 26, 18 August 1825.
48. *Home Public*, No. 34, 19 January 1826.
49. COV., Basta No. 131, Sl. No. 128 (2), pp. 116-20.
50. *Ibid.* (Appendix A)
51. Sherring, *Benares,* pp. 337-38.
52. *Calcutta Journal*, Vol. XXVI, No. LII, January-June 1856, p. 607.
53. Egerton, *Journal of a Winter's Tour in India*, Vol. I, pp. 72-73.
54. *Calcutta Journal*, Vol. XXVI, No. LII, January-June 1856, p. 607.
55. *Pre-Mutiny Records,* Benares Collectorate, Reg. No. 10, pp. 363- 66.
56. Letters of A. H. Chuk, Secretary to the Blind Asylum, quoted: *Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mitra, his son Baboo Gurudas Mitra, and his grandson Rai Pramada Das Mitra Bahadur*, p. 18.
57. *Ibid.*
58. Jnanendra Mohan Das, *Banger Bahire Bangalee*, p. 49.

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CHAPTER XII

THE PURSUIT OF LEARNING AND LITERATURE

AN OLD SEAT OF LEARNING

Varanasi, sometimes compared with the famous university towns of Oxford and Cambridge,[1] had developed as a seat of learning long before those universities had been dreamt of. The main difference between these university towns and Varanasi as centres of learning is that while the former were characterized by established formal institutions, the academies of Varanasi were non-institutional and non-formal in character. Sanskrit learning flourished in Varanasi by virtue of a network of private seminaries located throughout the City. This legacy was bequeathed to the Hindu scholars, better known as pandits, of the period under review who sustained and nurtured this tradition.

Scholars of the local Muslim community, known as *alims*, were also engaged in cultivating classical Arabic and Persian studies. Again, among local vernaculars, Hindi, Urdu and a few other languages, especially Bengali, were prominent and books were written in these languages. Finally, with the advent of the British, the English language was introduced and works were produced in this language as well. A survey of the cultivation of these languages, and especially Sanskrit, during the period under review will form the content of this chapter.

PANDITS AND SANSKRIT LEARNING

The pandits of Varanasi were the upholders of Sanskrit learning and they played an important role in the social, religious and cultural life of the rest of the country as well. They promoted the study of the scriptures by opening private seminaries, popularly known as *pathashalas*, *chatushpathis* or *tols*, maintaining students, writing works, copying manuscripts, taking part in *shastrarthas* (debates and disputations on the scriptures). They would also issue *vyavasthas* (verdicts) on socio-religious issues, give popular talks on the scriptures and conduct rituals. But among these, their most important function was teaching. Pandits were highly respected by

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society, and it was society in general, and the rich in particular, who maintained these pandits so that they could devote themselves fully to the culture of Sanskrit learning.

Local pandits had certain common characteristics, including deep religious faith in Vishwanatha, Annapurna, and the Ganga, imparting free education, efficiency in disputation (shastrarthas), dedication to the study of the scriptures, perfection in pronunciation, and above all, leading a life of plain living and high thinking.[2] Nevertheless, not all the pandits of the City had the same erudition or enjoyed equal honour and status, and dissension between them was not uncommon over the issue of status. Generally, South Indian pandits exerted supremacy over other scholars. The Hindusthani pandits of Kanyakubja and Sarayupara and Bengali pandits as well were considered inferior to the South Indians.[3] The reason attributed to this was that while there was no dearth of Vedic scholars among the South Indians, there was hardly any culture of Vedic study among the pandits of these other regions. They had even become ignorant of Vedic rituals, having been subjugated by the Muslims for such a long period.[4] Consequently, South Indian scholars actively engaged in Sanskrit cultural activities far outnumbered pandits hailing from other areas.[5] Thus, South Indians, especially the Dravida pandits, received great honour and were given considerable offerings compared to those of Hindusthani and Bengali pandits.

This situation changed considerably when Bengali scholars developed proficiency in a new branch of *Nyaya* philosophy. The rise of Bengali influence in Varanasi was also due to the advent of Taracharan Tarkaratna, the celebrated Bengali Sanskrit scholar, who was appointed Court-Pandit by Maharaja Ishwariprasad Narain Singh. He then vanquished Tatyaram Pandit, the celebrated Sanskrit scholar of South India in a 'shastrartha' regarding *Jagadishi Tika*.[6] He also participated in a debate with Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, who had come to Varanasi to propagate his ideas. Taracharan had a great friendship with Pandit Bastiram, a Hindusthani scholar and these two were reported to have reformed the current customs of the 'Pandit Samaj' (Community of Pandits) to a considerable extent.[7]

MONKS AND SANSKRIT LEARNING

Some monks of the City were also great scholars of Sanskrit and though their culture of Sanskrit was confined to religious studies, it was marked for its thoroughness and depth. The celebrated scholar-monks of

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Varanasi of our period included Kashthajihva Swami (Devatirtha Swami), Gauḍa Swami (Tarak Brahmananda Saraswati), Swami Manishyananda, Swami Vishuddhananda Saraswati, Swami Bhaskarananda Saraswati, Achyutananda Parivrajaka, Krishnanandachal, Swami Mahadevashram (Ramniranjan Swami), Hariharananda and others. Some also imparted knowledge of scriptures to students, both lay and monastic. For example, Swami Vishuddhananda Saraswati (1820-1898) taught a galaxy of brilliant students who also became famous in their later lives.*

PATHASHALAS AND SANSKRIT LEARNING

Pandits ran the pathashalas or chatushpathis, private seminaries of Sanskrit, out of their own homes or other private places. They were generally proficient in a particular branch of Sanskrit and would teach only that one, yet there was no shortage of pandits proficient in the various branches of Sanskrit. In addition to local students, students from different parts of the country would flock to Varanasi to study Sanskrit. They would take shelter at anyplace available and beg food from a plentiful supply of alms-houses.[8] In some cases, they were supported by a preceptor or relatives living in the City or nearby. It took years to become specialized in a particular branch of learning, after which qualified students would seek employment opportunities. Though such jobs were not always easy to secure, they always enjoyed a certain prestige throughout India for having studied in Varanasi.

There were no hard and fast rules to be followed in these pathashalas regarding time or periods of study, holidays, etc. And although there was hardly any formal co-ordination between these seminaries, they were guided by some conventions with only slight variations. For example, *anadhyaya*, or no study, was customary on *pratipada* (the first day of the new moon and full moon) and *ashtami* (the eighth day of the new moon and full moon). Reading and writing materials were scarce but this did not pose any serious problems to a largely oral tradition.

Not every branch of Sanskrit learning was equally popular nor every seminary equally attended as, of course, choices regarding branch of study and preceptor were left open to students. On the average, each pandit had from 10 to 20 students, and it is quite likely that he had to teach by groups when the number of students was high.

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* Details of these scholar-monks have been dealt with in the section 'Pandits and their Sanskrit Works' in the present chapter.

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THE VEDIC PATHASHALAS

The pathashalas were sometimes patronized by the chiefs and the rich. Every year three lakhs of rupees were granted for financial help to Sanskrit scholars of Varanasi from the Treasury of the Peshwas[9] and the *Vasanta Puja*, a ceremony wherein the ritualistic chanting of the Vedas was done by Vedic scholars, was introduced at the instance of the Peshwas.[10]

A good number of Vedic seminaries were set up in Varanasi, some of which are mentioned below :[11]

Dinkar Annajoshi's Pathashala of Rig-Veda was founded by Dinkar Bala Krishna Joshi (1810-1870). Balakrishna Kale, born in Bithur in 1838, was one of the famous students of this Pathashala.

Dongreji's Pathashala of Rig-Veda was set up by Vinayak Bhatta Dongre (1830-1904.) He was educated in Brahmavarta and his preceptor, Tatsat Guruji, had asked him to open this Pathashala in Varanasi.

Pandit Rajaram Shastri Karlekar's (1805-1875) Pathashala of *Yajurveda* was established in Ghasi Tola.[12]

Pandit Venimadhav Vidyadhar Lele's (1838-1918) Pathashala of *Krishna Yajurveda* produced many illustrious students.[13]

Pandit Kripakrishna Jani's Pathashala of *Shukla Yajurveda* was founded by Kripakrishna, son of Pandit Suryakanta, and a famous teacher. He was perhaps born in 1803 and died in 1863. He was succeeded by a rich lineage of students, many of whom, for example, Sakharam Pathak Dharmadhikari and Chintamani Dikshit, became illustrious for their scholarship.[14]

Pandit Ganeshram Samavedi's (1847-1931) Pathashala was founded by this famous scholar and teacher of the *Kouthumi* branch of *Samaveda*. Because of his great scholarship, he was addressed as 'Guru'.[15]

Pandit Jayadevji Pancholi (1857-1935), a Nagara Brahmin, was one of the greatest scholars of *Atharvaveda* of his time and also most probably ran a pathashala. It was generally Nagara Brahmins who taught the Atharvaveda. Jayadevji took the vow of *sannyasa* in his old age and became known as Jayadevashram Swami.[16]

MISCELLANEOUS PATHASHALAS

Fortunately, besides the pathashalas mentioned above, we find another list of Sanskrit pathashalas. This second list was prepared in the first quarter of the nineteenth century by an anonymous European presumably after a thorough and painstaking survey. It contains the names of the

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pandits, their places of residence, their subject of teaching and the number of scholars attached :[17]

Ananta Avadhani : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

Ahobal Shastri : Dashashwamedh Mahalla; the Shastra (*Dharmashastra* ?); sixteen students. He was also the author[18] of a number of books.

Keshav Bhatta Mulekar : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; ten students.

Keshav Bhatta Gokhale : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.

Krishna Bhatta Dev : Dashashwamedh Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students. He also authored a number of works.[19]

Krishnapantha Shesh : Shitala Ghat; Panini Vyakarana (Grammar); fifteen students.

Ganesh Bhatta : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

Ganesh Bhatta Gabe : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; thirty students.

Gangaram Shastri : Ram Ghat; Panini Vyakarana; twenty students.

Gopinath Bhatta Topley : Nathushah Mahalla; Panini Vyakarana, ten students.

Govinda Narayan Bhattacharya : Bengali Tola; the Nyaya; fifteen students.

Govinda Bhatta Keshkar : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.

Chintamani Dikshit : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

Chhiplekar (Chhiplekar is only the surname) : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; ten students.

Chhotu Bhatta Vishwarup : Dashashwamedh Ghat; Panini Vyakarana; fifteen students.

Jivaram Bhatta Gokhale : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.

Jagannath Avadhani : Narad Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.

Jagannath Dikshit : Dashashwamedh Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

Janardan Shastri Garga : Govindajee Nayak Mahalla; Panini Vyakarana; fifteen students.

Trimal Bhatta : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.

Tattva Joshi : Nayak Mahalla; Vyakarana and Kanun (Grammar and Law); twelve students.

Damodar Bhatta Sapre : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

Narayan Dikshit : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

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Narayan Dev : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students. He might be identical with one Narayan Dev who certified Warren Hastings.[20]

Narasingha Dikshit : Narad Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

Narasingha Avadhani : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.

Nana Bharkar (Bhaskar ?) : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifty students, at one point—the biggest number of students.

Nilkantha Shastri : Mangala Gauri Mahalla; the Shastra (Dharmashastra ?); twenty-five students.

Prananath Bhatta Sewra : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.

Prananath Panth Tole : Nathu Shah Brahmapuri; Nyaya; ten students.

Paramsukh Joshi : Daranagar; Jyotisha (Astrology); twenty students.

Vishwanath Bhatta Gurujee : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

Balu Dikshit : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

Babu Bhatta Puranik : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; ten students.

Balam Bhatta : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; ten students.

Balakrishna Bhatta Joshi : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; thirty students.

Vallabh Bhatta Mouni : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

Bala Dikshit Gorhbole : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

Balam Bhatta Bane : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

Vishwanath Bhatta Joshi : Narad Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-two students.

Vinayak Bhatta Dunde : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; ten students.

Babu Bhatta Nirmale : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; thirty students.

Vallabh Bhatta : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; twenty-five students.

Vishwanath Bhatta Vishwarup : Dashashwamedh Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.

Vishnu Shastri : Jatanbar Mahalla; Panini Vyakarana; fifteen students.

Bajtank Shobha Shastri : Dashashwamedh area; Vedanta and Mimamsa; twelve students.

Balakrishna Joshi: Brahma Ghat area; Vyakarana and Jyotisha (Grammar and Astrology), twelve students.

Vasudev Joshi : Ram Ghat; Jyotisha; fifteen students.

Bhairav Bhatta Tailangi : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; students not mentioned.

Bhaiya Dikshit : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; ten students.

Bhink Bhatta : Narad Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.

Bhink Bhatta Vishwaroop : Dashashwamedh Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.

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Bhatta Shastri : Agneshwar Ghat; Panini Vyakarana; ten students.
Bhishmapati : Sut Tola; Panini Vyakarana; ten students.
Minakshi Shastri : Dashashwamedh Ghat; Vedanta and Mimamsa; students not mentioned.
Bhairav Mishra : Siddheshwari Mahalla; Vyakarana and Nyaya; twenty students.
Meghnath Dev : Dhundhi Vinayak Mahalla; Panini Vyakarana; ten students.
Mansaram Pathak : Dashashwamedh Mahalla; Vyakarana and Nyaya; fifteen students.
Rangabhatta Ambekar : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.
Ramdikshit Pathak : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.
Ramchandra Dev : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; twenty students.
Rajaramjee : Manikarnika Ghat area; Vyakarana and Nyaya; fifteen students.
Lakshmi Shastri Borde : Agneshwar Ghat; Nyaya; ten students.
Shivalinga : Durga Ghat; the Vedas; seventeen students.
Shridhar Bhatta Dhupkar : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.
Shivaram Dikshit : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; twelve students.
Shobha Shastri : Durga Ghat; the Shastra (Dharmashastra ?); fifteen students.
Shivaram Panth : Ghasi Tola; Panini Vyakarana; ten students.
Shishu Shastri : Venimadhav; Panini Vyakarana; seventeen students.
Sukhram Bhatta Karve : Dashashwamedh Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.
Sitaram Bhatta Tekse : Durga Ghat; Panini Vyakarana; ten students.
Sadashiv Bhatta Gave : Dashashwamedh Ghat; Nyaya and Kanun; twelve students.
Mahadevjee : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.
Haridev Bhatta : Hanuman Ghat; the Vedas; fifteen students.
Harishankar Shastri : Bangali Tola; Panini Vyakarana; ten students.
Hariram Tori : Brahma Ghat; Kavya (Poetical Works); ten students.

A close study of this list helps us considerably to form a general idea of the Sanskrit studies during our period through pathashalas, for which Varanasi was so illustrious. The following tables have been prepared on the basis of the above list.

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TABLE : 1
SUBJECTS, STAFF AND STUDENTS

Subjects	Teachers	Students
The Vedas	46	833
Panini Vyakarana	13	167
Nyaya	3	35
Shastra (Dharmashastra ?)	3	56
Jyotisha	2	35
Kavya	1	10
Vyakarana & Nyaya	3	50
Vyakarana & Jyotisha	1	12
Vyakarana & Kanun	1	12
Vedanta & Mimamsa	2	12
Nyaya and Kanun	1	12
	76	1234

TABLE : 2

DISTRIBUTION OF PLACES OF RESIDENCE OF THE TEACHERS AND SITES OF THE PATHASHALAS

Durga Ghat - 21, Hanuman Ghat - 18, Dashashwamedh Ghat and Mahalla - 11, Narad Ghat - 4, Ram Ghat - 2, Agneshwar Ghat - 2, Brahma Ghat - 2, Manikarnika Ghat - 1, Shitala Ghat - 1, Venimadhav - 1, Bangali Tola - 2, Dhundhi Vinayak - 1, Sut Tola - 1, Nathu Shah Brahmapuri and Mahalla - 2, Mangala Gauri - 1, Ghasi Tola - 1, Govinda Nayak - 1, Jatanbar - 1, Nayak Mahalla - 1, Siddheshwari - 1, Daranagar - 1.

Of these seventy-six pathashalas, sixty-two were situated near ghats, revealing that most of the pandits lived in close proximity to the Ganga. These seminaries ranged from Brahma Ghat in the north to Hanuman Ghat in the south. They were concentrated around Durga Ghat in the north, where Maharashtrian pandits usually lived, Dashashwamedh Ghat in the centre and Hanuman Ghat in the south, where Tamilians generally lived. Pathashalas were also established in areas such as Daranagar, which were heavily populated by the Muslims.

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It seems from the surnames of the preceptors and the areas where they lived in the City that the majority of them were Maharashtrians and South Indians, especially, Tamilians. Again, the Maharashtrian and South Indian pandits were largely devoted to the teaching of the Vedas and Vyakarana. Jyotisha was almost exclusively taught by Maharashtrian pandits. There were, of course, Hindusthani, Parvatiya, Gujarati, Bengalee and pandits from other provinces, who taught different subjects.

The subjects of study were Purva Mimamsa (the Vedas), Panini, Uttara Mimamsa (Vedanta), Vyakarana, Nyaya, Jyotisha, Kavya, Kanun and Shastra (Dharmashastra ?). The names of Ayurveda and Purana are conspicuously absent from the list of the subjects studied at the pathashalas.

The majority of the teachers on the list, sixty-eight out of seventy-six, taught only one subject, and the remaining eight taught two subjects, for example, Vedanta and Purva Mimamsa, Nyaya and Kanun, or Vyakarana and Nyaya. The average number of students with each preceptor varied from ten to twenty, but in the case of the Vedas, there were at least thirteen teachers each of whom taught at least twenty-five students. In one case the number of students reading with one teacher reached fifty, a record number. This teacher, whose name was Nana Bharkar, used to reside at Hanuman Ghat and was in all probability a Maharashtrian Brahmin.

From the above statistics it appears that study of the Vedas including the *Vedangas*, was extensive in Varanasi as forty-six out of seventy-six teachers and 833 out of 1234 students devoted themselves to it. This clearly contradicts some contemporary observations that the study of the Vedas was not much in currency in Varanasi and that qualified teachers were not available. In fact, the picture evoked by the data is just the reverse for at least the better part of the nineteenth century.

Data in support of an extensive culture of the Vedas in Varanasi have also been corroborated by Swami Vishuddhananda Saraswati (1820-1898), one of the better-known scholars of Sanskrit in Varanasi. He was reported to have remarked that at a relatively young age he had encountered about one hundred pandits in the City, highly proficient in Vedic studies and particularly specialized in the Purva Mimamsa.[21] His young age would roughly coincide with the mid-nineteenth century. The popularity of Vedic studies was perhaps due to the special prestige accrued, and also due to the fact that learning the art of Vedic recital and rituals, being part of different socio-religious functions, was also lucrative.

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The statistics also indicate that Vyakarana followed Vedic studies in popularity and as many as 103 students studied Vyakarana from fourteen pandits exclusively devoted to teaching that subject, while five other pandits taught it along with other subjects. Apart from the Vedic study, greater demand for Vyakarana was perhaps owing to the fact that one willing to study other subjects was required to acquire sufficient knowldege of Vyakarana first. Moreover, after qualifying for the subject, one could open a pathashala and teach basic Sanskrit for which there was demand. There was also a considerable demand for the Nyaya, which was exclusively taught by four pandits and another four pandits taught it along with other subjects. We have no information about the books studied in these pathashalas, but a fair idea might be had from the list of books studied at the Benares Sanskrit College, quoted in Chapter XIII. It is quite likely that the books used in these pathashalas had been recommended for use in the curriculum of the college as well.

PANDITS AND SHASTRARTHAS

Traditionally speaking, the pandits used to take part in shastrarthas, literally meaning to find out the real meaning and import of the scriptures, which in practice were public disputations on scriptures. Shastrarthas would evoke great excitement and enthusiasm among both participants and onlookers for various reasons.

It was on such occasions that pandits exhibited the height of their scholarship by refuting the arguments of opponents and establishing their own at the same time. The prestige of contending parties was also involved in such polemical bouts, since the prestige of a winner would rise in the public eye. Rewards in the forms of cash or kind would be offered to the winners only, but on some occasions to all the participants. Shastrarthas would be organized on the occasions of special ceremonies like *shraddha*, or for deciding a debatable issue of some academic, social and religious interest. But shastrarthas assumed a special significance as it was customary for the propounder of a new idea or a challenger of a traditional idea on socio-religious issues to stand the test of shastrartha. One who emerged successfully from such an arduous venture could have a great impact on society, as for example, Shankaracharya's victory in the disputations with Mimamsakas, Jainas and Buddhists, contributed substantially to the regeneration of Hinduism in his time.

Shastrarthas have been referred to repeatedly in the scriptures and

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history of this land. Yajnavalkya's encounter with other Vedic sages in the court of Janaka, where a deep yet highly animated discussion on Brahman, the Supreme Reality, ensued; Shankaracharya's triumphs already referred to, Sri Chaitanya's encounter with Swami Prakashananda, a Vedantic and distinguished scholar-monk of Varanasi, are but some of the examples of historical shastrarthas. Thus we see that the shastrarthas, based on erudition, conviction, persuasiveness, logic, arguments and counter-arguments, and powerful delivery—all aiming to establish one's opinions by refuting those of the opponent—have been emphasized in India while propagating new ideas, especially theological and philosophical, since long ago, longer, in fact, than public debates over philosophical and theological issues by scholastics of the medieval Roman Catholic Church.*

Varanasi being the traditional seat of Indian religion, culture and learning attracted propounders of new ideas in different ages to establish their viewpoints here, as it was a well-known fact that if such ideas were accepted in Varanasi, they would likely be accepted in the rest of India. This made Gautama Buddha, Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nanaka and other distinguished founders of new faiths or schools of philosophy to approach Varanasi at different periods of history to preach their novel ideas.

In the modern age, it was the same motive that brought Swami Dayananda to Varanasi and made him appear in shastrartha with scholars of the traditional school. Swami Dayananda Saraswati, who was the founder of the Arya Samaj and who believed only in the *Karma Kanda*, or ritualistic portion of the Vedas, and had his own interpretation of it, wanted to establish that *Pauranik* Hinduism with its concept of image-worship was a deviation from the Vedic tradition. Swami Vishuddhananda Saraswati and other scholars of the traditional school of the City held the opposite view. Hence a shastrartha was arranged to decide the truth.

This shastrartha**, attended by a large number of onlookers, was held in the Anandabag garden near the Durga Kunda on 17 November, 1869, and was presided over by Maharaja Ishwarinarain.[22] The shastrartha started at 3 p.m. and continued for about four hours. Dayananda had to face a

* *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 8, p. 573.

** This shastrartha has been referred to in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* recorded by M.

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number of famous Varanasi scholars, including Pandit Taracharan Tarkaratna, Pandit Bala Shastri, Pandit Madhavacharya, and Swami Vishuddhananda in a battle of polemics. We are quoting below extracts from the proceedings for the enjoyment of the readers and to provide a sense of this historic disputation as one example of the shastrartha tradition.[23]

Maharaja Ishwarinarain instructed his Court-Pandit Taracharan Tarkaratna to commence the shastratha saying, 'I am also here to hear the discussion for and against the subject and to make a decision without any bias.' Taracharan requested Dayananda to speak first :

Dayananda : Where in the Vedas is idol-worship mentioned?

Taracharan : Only the Vedas are the authentic books for the evidence of that and the Puranas, Smritis, *Itihasa* are not—Where is such proof for this?

Dayananda : What is not found in the Vedas cannot be treated as evidence.

Taracharan : Why? It means that if any evidence is found in the Smriti, Purana, etc., but not in the Vedas, it cannot be accepted. Where is the proof of that?

Dayananda : There is no authenticity of the principles which are against the Vedas.

Taracharan : What is the proof of your statement?

Dayananda : Discussion on authenticity may be made later on, but meanwhile let us discuss the Vedas.

Taracharan : What kind of discussion do you want on the Vedas? Do you want to discuss the eternity or non-eternity of the Vedas ? Or the authenticity or non-authenticity of the Vedas ?

Dayananda : Whether or not idol-worship is mentioned in the Vedas should be discussed.

Taracharan : We accept the evidence of the Vedas as well as that of Smriti, etc. There are rules for idol-worship in the Puranas and therefore it stands that idol-worship is in accordance with the shastras.

Dayananda : There cannot be any authentic book other than the Vedas. I do not accept the evidence of the Smriti or the Purana.

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Taracharan : What is the proof of your statement ? Why is other evidence besides the Vedic not recognized ?

Dayananda : There cannot be any authentic book other than the Vedas.

Taracharan : What is *Vedaviruddha* (against the Vedas) ? Smriti, Itihasa, etc., are not against the Vedas ! What then is meant by Vedaviruddha?

Dayananda : The things which are not in the Vedas are against the Vedas.

Taracharan : Is it so stated in the Vedas or is it your own opinion ?

Dayananda : I shall reply to your question later on. The question pending is whether or not idol-worship is mentioned in the Vedas ?

Bala Shastri : What is the reason in the saying that the things which are not mentioned in the Vedas are against the Vedas ? This should be discussed first.

Dayananda : The origin of the *Shruti*, Smriti, etc., is the Vedas. This is evident from Manu, Katyayana, *Mahabharata*, etc. As the Mantras or hymns and the Vedanta and Mimamsa have their origin in the Vedas, please show that idol worship, likewise, also has its origin in the Vedas.

Vishuddhananda : Why are you repeating again and again that the origin of the Vedanta-Sutras is the Veda? If this is the fact, then please state where is the origin of the Brahma-Sutra *Rachananupapatteshcha nanumanam* (*Brahma-Sutras*, II.ii.1) in the Vedas ?

Dayananda : I am unable to answer this question. If you can remember all, then please tell me the characteristics of religion.

Vishuddhananda : In terms of the Mimamsa-Sutra, the main feature of religion is *chodanalakshano artho dharmah.**

This disputation, though continued for a long time, ended rather abruptly. Nevertheless, this shastrartha, pitting Swami Dayananda against Pandit Taracharan and his party in a place like Varanasi, also had clear historical significance. Irrespective of what Dayananda had wanted to establish, he left a deep impression upon his audience by his singular courage, staunch belief, deep study of the scriptures, and above all, his

* '*Dharma* is characterized by incentive to action'.

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polemic proficiency. This shastrartha made Dayananda well known in different quarters of India[24] and paved the way for the establishment of his faith as a new discipline on the religious map of India, and for the launching of an educational and social reform movement under the banner of the Arya Samaj. At the same time this shastrartha demonstrated the cohesion, conviction and erudition of Varanasi's scholars in defending Hinduism.

Though the methods and principles of argument were to be established at the outset by both contending parties under the chairmanship of a distinguished person, these were not always adhered to. Occasionally, attacks and counter-attacks would be on a personal level or emphasis would be more on polemical skills than on the topic under debate. Disputations could even end in chaos and confusion, as it had happened in the case of Dayananda's shastrartha with Hindu Scholars. Thus, there were those shastrarthas, which otherwise played a singular role in the cultivation of learning and the spreading of new ideas in Varanasi and throughout India, that did not always fulfil the purpose as intended.

PANDITS AND THEIR SANSKRIT WORKS

The following is a list of pandits who emerged in Varanasi, roughly between the third quarter of eighteenth century and the third quarter of nineteenth century, along with other relevant information. The names of those who certified Warren Hastings in 1788 on the occasion of his impeachment by the British Parliament; those who congratulated him on his acquittal;[25] and also those who both certified and congratulated him have been placed in the Appendix. Moreover, the names of the Bengalee Pandits who certified Hastings have been mentioned in the Appendix of Chapter XVI, devoted exclusively to the Bengalees.

Close scrutiny of the names of the pandits who certified and congratulated Warren Hastings reveals that at least a few among them were neither Brahmins nor pandits though Government Records listed them as such.[26]*

Ahobal Shastri : It has already been mentioned that he used to run a pathashala in the second decade of the nineteenth century at Dashashwamedh and during the time of preparation of the list of pandits,

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* The names of the pandits have been roughly listed alphabetically (Sanskrit), not chronologically, as the exact periods of all the pandits are not known.

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he had sixteen students who studied shastra. Ahobal was a legendary scholar of Varanasi with encyclopaedic knowledge.[27] Though he was a poor Brahmin with an unassuming appearance being tall, thin and dark, he was greatly honoured and respected by one and all (including Maharaja Uditnarain of Varanasi) for his erudition and character.[28] He had a fair knowledge of a wide range of subjects, from cooking to sculpture and authoured a number of works on varied subjects which include[29] *Mridanga Sutram*, a treatise on *mridanga*, an Indian percussion instrument, *Vamshi Sutram*, a treatise on native flute, and *Gramanya Sutram*, an interesting treatise which discusses how one can successfully quarrel with one's neighbours.

Achyutananda Parivrajaka : A monk and a teacher of the Vedanta who received the title of Vedanta Vidyavachaspati. He was a South Indian scholar (Dravid) and his period of teaching included the fifth and sixth decades of the nineteenth century.[30] One of his famous students was Mahamahopadhyay Kailas Chandra Shiromani who joined the Benares Sanskrit College staff in 1868. Kailas Chandra in turn taught him *Nyaya Vaisheshika.*

Ananda Giri Gosai : A Lecturer of Purana and Kavya at the Benares Sanskrit College* in 1791.[31]

Anantaram Sharma : He was present in the shastrartha arranged in 1876 in the house of Gurudas Mitra, already referred to, where he took the side of Bapudeva Shastri.[32] Other Pandits who were also present there were :[33] Dvarikadatta Sharma, Narayan Dev Shastri, Bastiran Sharma, Vishnushankar Sharma, Venishankar Sharma, Balashastri Ranade, Bhavani Prasad Sharma, Bhavani Datta Sharma, Ramdin Sharma, Ramshankar Sharma. Rajaji Sharma, Lakshman, Lakshman Jyotishi, Shyama Charan Sharma, Shankar Sharma, Shiva Kumar Mishra, Sangamlal, Sitaram Shastri, Sakharam Bhatta, Sudhakar Sharma Dvivedi, and Siddheshwar Sharma.

Indarjee : Professor of the Rig-Veda at the Sanskrit College in 1818.

Ishwar Chandra Nyayaratna : A Bengalee pandit, his father was Devnarayan Vachaspati and his son was Umeshchandra Sanyal, a Lecturer at the Queen's College.[34]

Ishwar Datta Pandey : One of the Varanasi pandits who issued a *vyavasthapatra* (verdict) against sea-voyages on the issue being referred to

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* Henceforth to be cited as Sanskrit College in this section.

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them by the Bengalee pandits. This *vyavasthapatra* was published in the *Samachar Darpan* of Calcutta on 2 April, 1836.[35] Among the other local pandits who signed this were Kashinath Shastri, Krishnacharan Sharma, Narayan Shastri, and Bitthal Shastri. Ishwar Datta was also one of the pandits whose names were mentioned in Pandit Rajaram Shastri's *Vidhavodvahashanka Samadhi*, written in 1855, which decried widow-remarriage.[36]

Umarao Shukla : This pandit also signed the above *vyavasthapatra* against the sea voyage in 1836 along with others and his name too is mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashanka Samadhi* of Rajaram Shastri.[37]

Umarao Pandit : A Professor of Vedanta at the Sanskrit College in 1844; he might be the former Umarao Shukla.

Umashankar Tarkalankar :[38] A blind Bengalee pandit, he travelled to every part of the City and discovered many lost *tirthas* and deities in the third quarter of the eighteenth century despite his blindness.* He wrote *Kashiyatra* jointly with his father Pandit Ramachandra Vidyalankar. Umashankar helped Jayanarayan Ghosal in translating *Kashi Khandam* and was referred to by him as one who was always sympathetic to others and ever ready to help them.

Udayankar Nanapathak : This nineteenth century *Nagara* Brahmin was a grammarian.[39] He composed the following works :

Anekamanyapadartha satravichara Ashtadhyayivyakhya;
Paribhashapradiparchis;
Pradvivachanam;
Bahuvrihyarthavicharam;
Yogavritti samgraham;
(*Laghu*) *Shabdendushekharavyakhya*.

Krishnadeva Pandit : The son and disciple of Pandit Lakshmipati, he was born in 1775 and died in 1835. After the passing away of his father, he was appointed a Lecturer in Jyotisha at the Sanskrit College in 1820. Though he was not the author of any works, he was highly proficient in *Golavidya* or Astrology.[40]

Krishnachandra Neogi : A Bengalee pandit who was a Professor at the Sanskrit College in 1841.

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* For further details on him, see Chapter VI : Identification and Reservation of Holy Sites.

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Kashinath Shastri : A Maharashtrian pandit, who was a Professor of Vyakarana at the Sanskrit College from 1830 to 1850, his father was Govindacharya, one of the famous pandits of Maharashtra, and his preceptors were Bhaskara Shastri Abhyankar, the illustrious scholar of Satara, and Gangaram Tripathi of Kashi. For his unique scholarship he was called 'Kashyamekah Kashinath'. Among his chief disciples were Pandit Rajaram Shastri Karlekar, Pandit Balashastri Ranade, and Pandit Jageshwar Shastri Ojha. Kashinath belonged to the school of *Parishkar Paddhati* of *Panini Vyakarana*.[41] He was also one of the pandits whose names were mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashanka Samadhi* of Rajaram Shastri.[42]

Krishnacharan Tarka Bhushan : This Bengalee pandit was a Professor of Vyakarana at the Sanskrit College in 1844.

Kailas Chandra Shiromani : This Bengalee pandit, appointed Professor at the Sanskrit College in 1868, came to Varanasi still earlier to pursue his own studies.[43]

Krishna Bhatta Adre (1750-1825) : His parents were Ranganath and Kamala, who were *Karhada* Brahmins of Maharashtra. The name of his teacher was Kashi and he migrated to Varanasi about 1800 and opened a pathashala at Dashashwamedh. He was an author of a number of books[44] mentioned below :

Kashika or *Gadadhari Vivriti* on Gadadhara's Cc* on *Tattvachintamani*.

Cc *Manjusha* or *Jagadishatoshini* on *Didhiti* or Jagadisha's commentary on *Tattvachintamani*.

The following commentaries or tracts of his works relate either to *Jagadishi* or *Gadadhari*, in which there may be a few overlappings or repetitions under slightly different titles :

Ataeva chatustayirahasyatika;
Anumitigranthatika;
Anumitisangativivriti;
Avachchhedakatvaniruktirahasyatika;
Avachchhedakalashanvivriti (on Gadadhara);
Avayavagrantharahasyatika;
Avayavatika;
Avayavatippani or Vivriti (on Gadadhara);

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* Cc means Capita chapter.

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Avayaviyakarikavivriti;
Asiddhagranthavritti (on Gadadhara);
Asiddhapurvapakshagranthabrihattika;
Asiddhasiddhantagranthabrihattika;
Asiddhigrantharahasyatika (on Gadadhara);
Asiddhigranthavivritti (on Gadadhara);
Akhyatavadatippani;
Dhaharanalakshanabrihattika;
Upadhivadabrihattika;
Kutaghatitalakshanabrihattika;
Kevalavyatirekigranthasya tika;
Kevalavayigranthasya tika;
Chaturdashalakshanikroḍa;
Chaturdashalakshani manjusha (on Jagadisha);
Chitrarupavicharadipika (on Gadadhara);
Jatisankaryavadam;
Tarkagranthabrihattika;
Tarkarahasyatika (on Gadadhara);
Tritiyamishralakshanabrihattika;
Dvitiyachakravartilakshanabrihattika;
Dvitiyamishralakshanabrihattika;
Pakshatatika (on Gadadhara);
Pakshatasiddhantagranthabrihattika;
Panchalakshanikroḍa;
Panchalakshani manjusha (on Jagadisha);
Paramarshagranthavivriti (on Gadadhara);
Paramarshapurvapakshagranthabrihattika;
Paramarsharahasyatika;
Puchchhatakshanabrihattika;
Purvapakshagranthavivriti (on Gadadhara);
Pratijnalakshanabrihattika;
Prathamachakravartilakshanabrihattika;
Badhagrantharahasyatika;
Badhapurvapakshagrantha brihattika;
Badhasiddhantagranthabrihattika;
Muktivadatika;
Lingavisheshanam;
Viruddhagrantharahasyatika;

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Viruddhapurvapakshagranthabrihattika;
Visheshaniruktibrihattika;
Visheshavyaptirahasyatika;
Vyatirekagranthatika (on Gadadhara);
Vyadhikaranadharmavachchhinnabhavagranthatika (on Jagadisha);
Vyaptigrharahasyatika;
Vyaptyanugamarahasyatika;
Vyutpattivadatika (on Gadadhara);
Shaktivadarthadipika or *Vivaranam* (on Gadadhara);
Samgativadam;
Satpratipakshagrantharahasyatika;
Satpratipakshavyakhya; *Prativadibhayankaram*;
Satpratipakshasiddhantagranthabrihattika;
Savyabhicharagranthatika (on Gadadhara);
Savyabhicharagranthartharahasystika;
Samanyaniruktikroḍa;
Samanyaniruktigranthartham (on Gadadhara);
Samanyaniruktitippani;
Samanyaniruktirahasyatika;
Samanyalakshana-Krishnambhattiyam;
Samanyalakshanarahasyatika;
Samamyabhavagranthartha (on Gadadhara);
Samanyabhavarahasyatika;
Simhavyaghrivyakhya (on Gadadhara);
Siddhantamanjari;
Siddhantamanjushakhandanam;
Siddhantalakshanatika;
Svaprakashavadartham;
Hetvabhasha.

Commentary : *Dipika* or *Ratnamala* on *Nirnayasindhu* of Kamalakara Bhatta.

Krishnanandachal : A monk; he was a pupil of Kailasachala Yati. He composed *Kaulagajamardanam* in Varanasi in 1854 to refute the authority of the Tantras, especially those dealing with the *Kaula* rites.[45]

Krishnadatta : His father was Bhavesha and he came to Varanasi from Mithila. He composed the following works, partly or fully, in Varanasi :[46]

Kuvalayasviya or *Kuvalayasva* : A drama in seven acts, the first five of

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which were written in Bengal in 1753 and the remaining two in Varanasi in 1783 on the prompting of Shubhanatha Mishra, an ardent student of Vyakarana.[47]

Gitagopipati : A *kavya*, which, in imitation of Jayadeva's *Gitagovindam*, was written in Varanasi in 1782.[48]

Commentary : *Ganga* or *Shashilekha* on *Gitagovindam* of Jayadeva.[49]

Chandicharitachandrika on the story of Chandi in *Devimahatmya*. It was composed in imitation of *Gitagovindam* of Jayadeva.[50]

Puranjanacharita Natakam (Mss. dated 1779), *Prastavana* (preface) mentions a patron named Divakara Purushottama.[51]

Kavindra Bahadur Lalla Dikshita : A Maharashtrian pandit whose father was Lakshmana Dikshit and grandfather was Shankara Dikshit. This family settled in Varanasi with the surnames of Morvanikara and Bandhokara.[52]

He composed *Anandamandirastotram*[53], a hymn on Devi in 1820.

Kakaram (also called Ramakrishna) : He was a son of Dilarama, a pandit of Varanasi, and was living there around 1850.[54] His name was also mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* of Rajaram Shastri.[55] He was the author of the following works :

Commentary on *Atmapurnam* of Shankarananda:[56] This commentary is a famous work on the Vedanta.[57]

Commentary on *Janaki Charanachamara Stotram* : It was composed in 1848.[58]

Kalishankar Bhattacharya (circa 1800) : A famous Bengalee pandit, he belonged to the school of *Navyanyaya*. He was born in Vajrayogini village in the Faridpur District, now in Bangladesh, and was appointed as a cook at the residence of the celebrated logician and professor Chandranarayana of the Sanskrit College. He learnt Nyaya by merely listening to Chandranarayana teaching pupils.[59] He was the author of many commentaries and *kroḍapatra*. Some of his works which are mentioned below may overlap :[60]

Kalishankariyam (unspecified), Nyaya;
Anumanajagadishikroḍa;
Anumitikroḍa (*patrika*);
Avachchhedakatvaniruktikroḍa (*patrika*);
Avayavapatrika;
Asiddhapurvakpakshagranthakroḍa;

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Asiddhasiddhantagranthakroḍa;
Udaharanalakshanakroḍa;
Upanayalakshanakroḍa;
Upadhisiddhantakroḍa;
Kutaghatitalakshanakroḍa;
Kevalanvayipatrika;
Jagadishikrorhatika;
Jagadishivyaptipatram;
Tattvachintamani;
Tarkagranthakroḍa;
Tritiyamishralakshanakroḍa;
Pakshatapatrika;
Pakshatapurvapakshagranthakroḍa;
Pakshatasiddhantagranthakroḍa;
Panchalakshanikroḍapatra;
Paramarshapurvapakshagranthakroḍa;
Puchchhalakshanakroḍa;
Pratijnalakshanakroḍa;
Prathamachakravartilakshanakroḍa;
Prathamanisralakshanakroḍa;
Badhasiddhantagranthakroḍa;
Mathuritika;
Visheshanirukshikroḍa;
Visheshavyaptipatrika;
Vyaptipanchakamathurikroḍa;
Vyaptipanchakapatrika;
Vyaptyanugamapatrika;
Satpratipaksha (Siddhanta) Kroḍa;
Savyabhicharam;
Savyabhicharapurvakapakshagranthakroḍa;
Samanyalakshanavivechana;
Samanyairuktikroḍapatram;
Simhavyaghralakshanakroḍa (patra);
Siddhantalakshanapatrika;

Commentary on *Vyaptipanchakarahasyam* of Mathuranatha;
,, on *Satpratipakshadidhiti*;
,, on *Savyabhicharam* of Gadadhara;

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Commentary on *Savyabhicharadidhiti*;
,, on *Sadharanadidhiti*;
,, on *Samanyanirukti* of Gadadhara;
,, on *Samanyaniruktididhiti*.

Kashthajihva Swami : His monastic name was **Devatirtha Swami**[61] and he belonged to this period.* He wrote extensively both in Sanskrit and in Hindi. But only few of his works have been published and most of the remaining works have been preserved in the Ramnagar Fort Collection.[62] Some of his works are mentioned below :[63]

Shivacharana Paricharya (printed in litho);
Ramacharana Paricharya;
Krishnacharana Paricharya;
Mahabhashya Paricharya;
Ramanuja Paricharya;
Sahasranama Paricharya;
Ramaraksha Paricharya;
Paddhati Paricharya;
Niti-tarangam;
Dharma-tarangam;
Yoga-tarangam;
Samkhya-tarangam;
Kala-tarangam;
Chhanda-tarangam;
Shavdashakti-tarangam;
Upapatti-tarangam;
Upanishad-tarangam;
Shiksha-vyakhya;
Shandilyasutra-vyakhya;
Gayatri-vyakhya;

Udasina sadhu stotram : This *stotragrantha* is very popular for its simple and devotional style. It was published from Amritsar with a commentary by Brahmananda in C. 1883.

Kashinath Shastri : One of the signatories to a *vyavasthapatra* issued by the Varanasi Pandits in 1836 against sea-voyage, he may also be the Kashinath Shastri who was Professor at the Sanskrit College.[64]

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* For further details on him, see Chapter VI.

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Krishnananda Vyas : Emerging in the City in the middle of the nineteenth century, his father was Hirakananda Vedavyas and his grandfather was Amarananda Vedavyas. *Ragakalpadruma*, a sizeable compilation of songs and theories of music and dance was composed by him and he was awarded the title of Ragasagara.[65]

Krishnapati Dharmadhikari : A Maharashtrian pandit born in Kashi in 1833, he was first patronized by Raja Sajjan Singh of Udaipur, Rajasthan, and later on by Maharaja Ishwarinarain Singh of Varanasi. He wrote the following works :[66]

Kashika Vinod—a poem published in 1885;
Ratnavali (*gadyakavya*)—unpublished;
Kalikanandakrantam;
Shatak (*shatak kavya*)—unpublished;
Sajjanendra Prayoga Kalpadruma (*vyakarana grantha*).

Kashinath Bhattacharya (Tarkalankar)* : A Bengalee pandit and the first Principal of the Sanskrit College.[67] He composed[68] the following :

Shavdasandarbhasindhu, written by the Government order in 1790-91, it was a lexicon arranged alphabetically. *Shyamasaparyavidhi*, described as *Siddhantasaratmakam*, it was a digest of Tantric worship of Devi composed in Varanasi in 1777, and *Madyapanavichara* from *Saparyasara*. Whether he was identical with Kashinath Tarkalankar who had written *Prayashchittakadambasarasamgraham* and commentaries on *Tithitattva* of Raghunandana and on *Prayashchittatattva* of Raghunandana Bhattacarya is not definitely known.

Gangaram Bhatt : Professor of Ayurveda at the Sanskrit College in 1791.

Gopal Bhatt : He was a Professor of Samaveda at the Sanskrit College in its early period, but the exact dates of his service are not known.

Gangaram (The Senior) : He was a senior Professor of Rig-Veda at the Sanskrit College in 1818.

Guljar Sharma : A Professor at the Sanskrit College in and around May 1844, his name is also mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* of Rajaram.

Gadadhar Dikshit :[69] He lived in Varanasi during the period under

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* See Chapters XIII & XVI for further details on Kashinath.

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review and his father and teacher was Chintamani Dikshit. His works included *Antyeshtipaddhati Madhyandinam*, composed in 1787, and *Vratarka*.

Giridhar (Dharin) **Goswami** (1791-1840) :[70] A descendant of Vallabha. His parents were Gopala and Krishnavati and his great grandfather was Vitthalacharya. His teacher was Yogi Sri Gopeshwarji of the *Shuddhadvaita* school and Ramakrishna Bhatta was his close associate. His works follow :

Urdhvapundramartandam : A commentary on *Gadyamantram* recited at the *Brahma-Sambandha* ceremony;
Nrisimhashtakam (*Lakshminrisimhastotra*);
Prapanchavadam;
Cc *Vivaranam* on C* *Anubhashyam* of Vallabhacharya on *Brahmasutram*;
C *Vivriti* on *Bhaktivardhini* of Vallabhacharya;
C Balaprabodhini on the *Bhagavatam* (*skanda*-I);
C (*Hari*) *Toshini* or *Dipika* on Vitthaleshwara's *Vidvanmandanam*;
Suddhadvaitamartandam in ninety-five verses;
Shrutirrahasya Bhakti;
C *Vivriti* on *Siddhantarahasyam* of Vallabha.

Gangaram : A *Parvatiya*[71] scholar, his father, Pandit Kamalapati Tripathi, and uncle, Pandit Nilambar Pant, migrated to Varanasi from the villages of Jyoli and Tiladi in the district of Almora respectively, during the middle of the eighteenth century.[72] Gangaram had been educated by his father who died when he was only sixteen or seventeen. Maharaja Daulat Rao Sindhia gave him 500 rupees as a mark of respect for his great scholarship when he was going on a pilgrimage to Badrinath and to visit his father's house. With the money received from Sindhia, Gangaram finally settled near Asi Ghat and began to teach Vyakarana. Among his disciples were Pandit Ganganath Shastri Gadgil, Pandit Raghunath Shastri, and Pandit Ranganath, a Nepalese. It has been claimed that a new method of teaching grammar, which continued for quite a long time in Varanasi, was introduced by Pandit Gangaram who inserted *Laghushabdendushekharam* and *Paribhashendushekharam* in the syllabus of Vyakarana.

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* C means Commentary.

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Chandranarayan Pandit : A Bengalee pandit and the first Professor of Nyaya at the Sanskrit College,[73] appointed after the retirement of Ramprasad.

Chandranath Nyay Panchanan : A Bengalee pandit of Nyaya who settled in Varanasi during this period.[74]

Chandicharan Nyayalankara : He was also a Bengalee pandit living in the City during this period.[75]

Jayaram Jyotishi : The son of Babua Jyotishi, a celebrated astrologer, he himself was a renowned astrologer and attached to the court of the local Maharaja.[76]

Jayanarayan Ghoshal : A famous Bengalee aristocrat, he authored a number of Sanskrit and Bengali works.* He migrated to Varanasi in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. His works included, *Shankari Sangit*, published by Samskrita Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, in 1923,[77] *Brahmanarchanachandrika*[78], and *Jayanarayana Kalpadruma*.[79]

Jayanarayan Tarkaratna : A Bengalee pandit, he was patronized by Maharaja Ishwarinarain Singh.[80] *Tarkaratnavali*, a treatise on *Tarkashastram*, was written by him and published in 1888.

Jatashankar : A Professor at the Sanskrit College in its early stages, for some time he also served as Rector there.[81]

Jayaram Bhatt : He was also a Professor at the Sanskrit College in its early days.[82]

Jagannath Shastri (Gadgil) : He belonged to the early nineteenth century. His teacher was Pandit Gangaram Tripathi, a Parvatiya scholar and one of his students was Pandit Kashinath, later the teacher of Pandit Rajaram Shastri.[83]

Tarak Brahmananda Saraswati :** Also known as Gauḍa Swami, he lived in Varanasi in the first half of eighteenth century where he passed away in 1859. He was a monk as well as a famous scholar of Sanskrit and among his disciples the most famous was Swami Vishuddhananda Saraswati.

Taracharan Tarkaratna : Also known as Tarachandra[84] and Tarachand,[85] he was a renowned Bengalee pandit who hailed from

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* For further details concerning him, see Chapter XVI.

** For further details, see Chapter VI : Religion/Distinguished Asceties.

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Bhattapalli, Bengal, and was living in Varanasi in the 1850s. We have already mentioned that he was the Court-Pandit of Maharaja Ishwarinarain Singh and that he also appeared in a shastrartha with Swami Dayananda.[86] His sons were Pramathanath Tarkabhusan and Priyanath Tattwaratna, who also became illustrious scholars of Sanskrit. His works included :

Kananashatakam, a poem;[87]
Ramajanmabhana, a poem;[88]
Shringararatnakaram;[89]
Tarkaratnakaram,[90] a treatise on *Nyayashastram*;
Satyanarayana Katha.[91]

Durgashankar Pathak : An *Oudichya* Brahmin, he lived during the later part of the eighteenth century and was a great scholar of both astronomy and *Kavyashastra.*[92] His students included Pandit Lajjashankar, Professor of Astrology at the Benares Sanskrit College, and Pandit Hirananda Chaturvedi, Head of the Sahitya Department of the same college. For his extraordinary scholarship, he was awarded the title 'Jagadguru'.

Devanarayan Vachaspati : A Bengalee pandit who was possibly identical with one Devanarayan Sharma who lived in the City during our period. He opened a pathashala where he would teach scriptures to both Bengalee and Hindusthani students. He lived for nearly one hundred years.

Dadam Bhatta : He helped Parashuram Pathak in his compilation of the *Ahnika Prayogam*, C. 1790s.

Dube Gujarati : He was a Professor of the Yajurveda at the Sanskrit College in its early days.

Durgadatta Pandit : He was a Professor at the Sanskrit College in 1844.

Devadatta Sharma : Also a Professor at the Sanskrit College in 1844. Perhaps identical with one Devadatta who was mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* of Rajaram.[93]

Damodar Shastri (1830-40) : He taught *Tarkashastram* to Pandit Rajaram Shastri, Professor at the Sanskrit College.[94]

Devkrishna Sharma : Born in 1813, his father was Ramdhan Mishra and his preceptor was Pandit Lajjashankar Sharma. He acquired scholarship at a young age and started teaching astrology at the age of 20 to 22. As Court-Astrologer in Kashmir in 1860, he was appointed

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Professor of Jyotisha at the Sanskrit College and retired in 1886. One of his famous disciples was Pandit Sudhakar Dwivedi, who later became Principal of the Sanskrit College.[95]

Dukhabhanjan Kabi : A scholar of Sanskrit,[96] he composed the following :

Chandrashekhara Charitam, a biographical poem;[97]
Vagaballabham on *Chhandashastram*.[98]

Devaraja : Patronized by Raja Chet Singh of Varanasi, he wrote *Prayashchittasamgraham*.[99]

Nrisimha (Bhaskara) : The pupil of Sarveshvara Shastri, he wrote commentary on *Praudhapriya* in 1788 under the patronage of Raja Vrajalala.[100]

Narayan Shastri : One of the signatories to a *vyavasthapatra* (verdict) issued in 1836.[101]

Narayan Shastri : Perhaps identical with the above, he was a Professor at the Sanskrit College in and around May 1844.[102]

Nandalal Sharma (1804-1867) : He, professor at the Sanskrit College in and around May 1844[103], was a *Sarayupariya* Brahmin of Kada Manikpur village of Allahabad district and was a great scholar of *Phalita Jyotisha* (Applied Astrology).[104]

Narayan Bhatta Dharmadhikari (C. 1790) : He helped Parashuram Pathak in his compilation of the *Ahnikaprayogasamgraham*.

Parashuram Pathak : Son of Gopal Pathak, grandson of Shankar Pathak and great grandson of Shiva Pathak, he was a pupil of Shivaram Bhatta Pauranika of Punyastambha[105] and the compiler of *Ahnikaprayogasamgraham*, a work of Dharmashastra,[106] completed in Vikram Sambat, Varanasi, in 1851. He was helped financially by an officer of King Sahu. A number of scholars, namely, Mahadeva Bhatta, Prabhakara Dikshita, Dadam Bhatta, Narayana Bhatta Dharmadhikari and others helped the author in this work.

Babua Jyotishi : A Maharashtrian scholar in all branches of astrology; he had special proficiency in applied astrology, and was Court-Astrologer in the Ramnagar Fort Palace during the reign of Maharaja Uditnarain Singh.[107]

Balakrishna Jyotishi : The younger brother of the above, a great scholar of astrology, and also Court-Astrologer to the Raja of Varanasi.[108]

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Vireshwar Seth / Shesh : The Professor of *Panini Vyakarana*[109] and Rig-Veda at the Sanskrit College when it was started in 1791.

Balajee Pandit : Professor of the Vedas at the Sanskrit College, he was appointed perhaps in March 1815.[110]

Vitthal Shastri : Most probably he was identical to the Vitthal Shastri who was one of the signatories to a *vyavasthapatra* issued by the Varanasi pandits against sea-voyages in 1836.[111] He was also the Professor of Grammar in and around July 1844 at the Sanskrit College.[112] He showed his liberal outlook in his bid to translate an English work into Sanskrit. This translation was undertaken for the students of his college. His works include :[113]

Bekaniyasutravyakhyanam, an explanatory version of Bacon's *Novum Organum*, and *Panchabhutavadartham* (1859), written under the direction of J. R. Ballantyne, the Principal of Benares Sanskrit College, where Vitthal Shastri was a teacher. The second work contained lectures on the Chemistry of the five Hindu elements of which the universe is made.[114]

Baladev Sharma : He was a Professor at the Sanskrit College in and around 1844.[115]

Bapudeva Sharma Shastri (Nrisimha) (1821-1890) : Born to Sitaram and Satyabhama, he was a member of the Devaparanjape family of Belaneshwar that settled in Kayagambatoka. His preceptor in Astrology was Pandit Sevaram Sharma.[116] Bapudeva had a long lease of life and made his erudite scholarship felt in many ways.

He successfully upheld his views as expressed in his *Drik-Siddha-Panchanga* during a shastrartha arranged in the house of Baboo Gurudas Mitra in 1876. Among other scholars who were present on that occasion[117] were Ramdin Sharma, Dwarikadatta Sharma, Narayan Deo Shastri, Lakshman, Shyamacharan Sharma, and Siddheshwar Sharma. He was said to have had a more progressive outlook than most of his contemporary Sanskrit scholars. Appointed Professor of Astronomy and Mathematics at the Sanskrit College in 1842, he retired from the post in 1889 after an accomplished career of long forty-seven years. He learnt English as well and contributed at least one article to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1858.[118] The title of the article was 'Bhaskar's Knowledge of the Differential Calculus'. In this article, Bapudeva contradicted the theory that the principle of Differential Calculus was unknown to the Hindu Mathematicians.

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He received honour and marks of distinction from many quarters including, honorary membership of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and the Asiatic Society of Bengal, fellowship of Calcutta University, and was also awarded the title of Mahamahopadhyay in 1882 by the Indian Government. Among his many illustrious disciples, were Pandit Sudhakar Dwivedi, Pandit Vinayak Shastri, Pandit Chandra Dev, and Pandit Ganapatideva, his son.

He authored a number of works in Sanskrit, English and Hindi. One of the motives of his writing in a simpler style and also of translating and correcting works on *Siddhanta Ganit* was to help students. Bapudeva introduced a new *Panchanga* called *Drik-Siddha-Panchanga*. Published regularly, it highlighted the mechanisms of a modern observatory.

Some of his Sanskrit monographs are as follows :[119]

Siddhanta Shiromanisthodaharanadwara Chalaganitavishaye Bharatiyanam Jnanam : Written in 1858, it dealt with the knowledge of Indians on *Chalaganit* as illustrated by the examples of *Siddhanta Shiromani*;

Shiromani Prakasham : A summary of *Siddhantas*, this work was widely circulated in different parts of India and created a stir among the pandits of Ujjain, Pune, Varanasi, Mathura, Nagpore and Satara. It was reported that 'the Ujjain pandits contended for the unadulterated Puranas, denying that the earth was a sphere and asserting that Bapu's work was full of heterodoxy'[120];

Jyotishacharyashayavarnan[121];
Suryasiddhantasopapattika (1861);
Phalitavicharam (1862);
Sayanavadam (1862);
Manamandiravarnanam (1862);
Prachinajyotishachyasayavarnanam (1862);
Tattwavivekapariksha (1862);
Vichitraprashnasamgrahashchottaram (1862);
Atulayantram (1865);
Panchakoshiyatranirnayam;
Nutanapanchanganirmanam (1875);
Panchangopapadanam (1875).

Baneshwar Bhattacharya (Vidyalankar) : He was an illustrious Bengalee pandit whose father was Ramadeva. A native of Guptapalli,

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Hooghly District, Bengal,[122] he enjoyed the patronization of Krishnachandra of Nadia, Nawab Alivardi Khan of Murshidabad, Chitrasena of Burdwan and Navakrishna of Shobhabazar, Calcutta. It is not known when he actually came to Varanasi but he passed away here in 1785. His brother was Ramkanta Bhattacharya whose son, Balaram Bhattacharya, was appointed the Dewan of Maharaja Mahipnarain Singh of Varanasi. He wrote the following works :

Rahasyamritam : An epic in twenty cantos, perhaps undertaken in Varanasi at the request of Kriparam Ghosh, the elder brother of Dewan Ramlochan Ghosh of Pathuriaghata, Calcutta. The theme of the *Kumarasambhavam* of Kalidasa has been extended here with a description of the settlement of Hara (Mahadeva) and Parvati (Durga) in Varanasi after their marriage;[123]

Kashishatakam : One hundred verses on Varanasi, perhaps written when he visited the City in 1755;[124]

Chitrachampakam : Composed in 1744 for his patron Chitrasena of Burdwan, it contains both historical and geographical materials;[125]

Chitrabhishekam also composed for above patron;[126]

Baneshwar was also among the scholars who compiled *Vivadarnavasetu*, a work of Dharmashastra, at the request of Warren Hastings, for use in the settlement of legal cases.

Vachaspati Shastri : A Parvatiya scholar who was living in Varanasi in 1850s. His father was Nildevji Pantha.[127]

Vidyananda Mahamohopadhyay : A fourth descendant of Nilambar Pantha, he came to Varanasi to settle,[128] and belonged to the period under review.

Balaram Vachaspati : He was a Bengalee pandit who partially helped Jayanarayan Ghoshal in translating the *Kashi Khandam* into Bengali around the last decade of the eighteenth century.[129]

Becharam Sarvabhouma : He was a Bengalee pandit who lived in the City around 1857.[130]

Balabhadra : The Court-Poet of the Ramnagar Fort Palace of Raja Chet Singh. He composed *Chetsinghavilasam* (*Chetsinghakavya*), a poem on the biography of Chet Singh.[131]

Vishwanath : Son of Trimaladeva, he originally lived on the banks of the Godavari and subsequently migrated to Varanasi. He wrote

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Mrigankalekha, a drama composed in Varanasi and enacted at the festival of Vishveshwara at the end of the eighteenth century. Though imitating *Ratnavali* in plot, it had an enchanting style and fancy.[132]

Vaidyanath Bhatta : A descendant and disciple of Nagoji Bhatta. Lakshmidevi, the supposed author of *Balambhatti*, was his wife and Balasharman Paugondia (or Paygunde) was his son. He was also known as Annam Bhatta.[133] He composed commentaries on the works, mainly grammatical, of his teacher and predecessor Nagoji Bhatta. His works include :

Comentary on *Paribhashendushekharam* of Nagoji Bhatta;[134]
Commentary on the *Vyavahara* section of *Mitakshara*, studied with interest even by modern Sanskrit Scholars of Varanasi;
Bhaktitarangini, containing *Dhyana*, *Upasana*, *Stuti*, etc.;
Panchatarangam.

Balasharman Paugondia :[135] Fourth generation in succession from Bhattoji Dikshit, his father was Vaidyanath Bhatta and mother was Lakshmidevi. He was a Professor of Vyakarana and a great scholar of Dharmashastra. He authored a number of works, including :

Commentary on *Shabdaratnam*;
Commentary on *Shabdendu Shekharam*;
Balambhatti, a commentary on the *Mitakshara*, it has been held by some scholars that his mother Lakshmidevi was the author of this work;
Dharmashastrasamgraham, along with Manudev, his chief disciple, Balasharman prepared this work which was popularly called *Colebrooke's Digest*, as it was done at the request of Mr H. T. Colebrooke;
Commentary on *Bhaktitarangini*, which was written by his father Vaidynath Paygunde;[136]
Lakshminarayana Parivashyapaddhati;[137]
Avimuktatattwam, dealing with the *mahatmyam* (greatness) of Kashi. According to one school, this work was written by his step-mother, Bhavani;[138]
Vyavaharapadaparipuranam, a work on Dharmashastra;[139]
Gotrapravaranirnayam.[140]

Becharam Nyayalankar :[141] A Bengalee pandit who visited Varanasi around 1800, he wrote the following works :

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Anandatarangini, an itinerary from Chandannagar in Bengal to Varanasi, dated 1801;

Siddhantatari, a commentary on the *Anandatarangini*.

Balakrishna Bhatta (1850-1860) : A famous teacher of the Vedas, Mahamahopadhyay Gangadhar Shastri, Professor of *Sahitya* and *Darshan* at the Sanskrit College (1879-1909), was one of his noted students.[142] He wrote *Kashitattvaprakasham* in 1844.[143]

Balashastri Ranade :[144] Known as Balasaraswati, he came to Varanasi around 1855 from South India to settle here permanently. According to another version, his father, Govinda Bhatta, was married to Kashi Bai and Balashastri was born to them in Varanasi in 1839. Educated by Pandit Kashinath Shastri and Pandit Rajaram Shastri, he was Professor of Dharmashastra at the Sanskrit College from 1862 to 1877. Mahamahopadhyay Gangadhar Shastri and Pandit Damodar Shastri, the famous Maharashtrian scholars of Varanasi, were two of his reputed students.[145] He took part in the shastrartha with Pandit Dayananda Saraswati in 1869 and another in 1876 at the house of Gurudas Mitra.[146] He was the author of the following works :

Doshabhashanirasanam on *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* by his teacher, Rajaram Shastri;

Commentary on *Vyakaranamahabhashyam*;

Commentary on *Sharasharavivekam* of *Paribhashendu*;

Vrihajjotistomapaddhati.

Vidyaranya Tirtha : A monk residing at the City in the first half of the nineteenth century, he initiated Devatirtha Swami who was renowned as Kashthajihva Swami. He wrote *Vishnusahasranama Parichayam*, a commentary on *Vishunusahasranama*, which reveals the author's deep knowledge of the Vedas. It was printed in 1852 by Anandavana Yantra Press in litho.[147]

Vishuddhananda Swami[148] (1820-1898) : He took sannyasa initiation from Tarak Brahmananda Saraswati, renowned as Gauḍa Swami who lived in Varanasi around the first half of the nineteenth century. Vishuddhananda studied Mimamsa and Vedanta from his Guru and became one of the most celebrated scholars of the City. Among his better known students of Varanasi were Dukhabhanjan Kavindra, a famous poet, Dindayal Sharma, Umacharan Kaviraj, and Mahamahopadhyay Pramathanath Tarkabhushan.

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He, along with other pandits of the City, encountered Swami Dayananda Saraswati in a shastrartha.[149]

Bhauji : The son of Pandit Jayram and grandson of Babua Jyotishi, a famous scholar of astrology, he was himself a great astrologer and was patronized by the local king.[150]

Bhaskarananda Swami : A great monk and an erudite scholar of Sanskrit, who came to the City in 1868. He had a large number of devotees from every strata of the society.[151]*

Mathuranath Pandit : He was appointed Librarian of the Sanskrit College around 1813.[152]

Madanmohan Vachaspati : A Bengalee pandit who lived in the City around 1857,[153] as were Mahesh Panchanan, Mrityunjoy Shiromani, Madhusudan Vidyabhushan, and Madan Mohan Shiromani.

Manudeva : A scholar of both Vyakarana and Dharmashastra, he helped Balambhatta in composing *Dharmashastrasamgraham*, and wrote, *Laghubhushanakasham*, a commentary on *Vaiakaranabhushanasaram*.[154]

Mahadeva Bhatta : Helped Parashuram in composing *Ahnikaprayoga-samgraham* in 1794, along with other pandits.[155]

Manishyananda Swami : A *dandi* monk, he was a great scholar of Sanskrit. He took sannyasa initiation from Swami Bhavananda, who was renowned for his spirituality and who passed away by *Prayopaveshana*, (starvation till death).

Mahadevashram Swami (1785-1870) : Famous in the City as Ramaniranjan Swami, he authored *Panchaksharibhashyaprakashika*, a commentary on the *Panchaksharibhashyam* of Padmapadacharya, printed by Amara Yantralaya Press in Varanasi in 1887.[156]

Yogadhyan Mishra : A Professor at the Calcutta Sanskrit College in and around 1826, he came to Varanasi and passed away here on 21st November 1849.[157]

Yageshwar Shastri : Born in Balia, U. P., in 1828, he was one of the most illustrious students of Pandit Kashinath Shastri Karlekar of the Sanskrit College. Yageshwar was a scholar of Vyakarana and became famous for his scholarship and saintly life. He wrote *Haimavati*, an explanation of *Paribhashendushekharam*.[158]

* For further details on Swami Vishuddhananda and Swami Bhaskarananda, see Chapter VI.

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Ramakrishna Dikshit : The eldest son of Narayan Bhatta of Varanasi, he wrote *Anantavratodyapanaprayogam*, a work on Dharmashastra.[159]

Ramachandra Vidyalankar :[160] A Bengalee pandit, he with his son, Umashankar Tarkalankar, wrote *Kashiyatra Paddhati*, a priest's manual for pilgrimage to Varanasi.

Ramchandra Tara : The first Professor of the Vedas and the Vedanta at the Sanskrit College, appointed in 1791.[161]

Ramprasad Tarka Panchanan : A Bengalee pandit and already very senior when he was appointed the first Professor of Nyaya at the Sanskrit College in 1791.[162] He retired in 1813 at the age of one hundred and three years. At that time he was entirely blind and unable to move without assistance. Of high character, he was respected for his vast learning and devotion to his duties. He was awarded a pension of Rs. 50 per month with a *parwanah* testifying to the appreciation of his valuable services.

Rupnarayan : Professor of Vedanta at the Sanskrit College in the first decade of the nineteenth century, he was succeeded in his post by Balaji Pandit, c. 1813.[163]

Ramananda Pandit : Appointed Rector of the Sanskrit College possibly in 1805.[164]

Rajaram Shastri : Son of Govinda Sharma, a *Chitpavan* Brahmin of the Deccan. His teachers were Pandits Hari Shastri Ranade, Damodar Shastri, and Kashinath Sharma Shastri. He was appointed the Professor of Samkhya possibly in 1856 and then Professor of Dharmashastra in 1863 at the Sanskrit College where he taught till 1879. Balashastri Ranade was one of his famous disciples. Rajaram received wide acclaim for his scholarship when he had visited states like Gwalior.[165] He wrote *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi*, in 1855 and dedicated it to his father Pandit Kashinath Shastri. Though it was his only published work, it was widely appreciated for the author's erudite scholarship. The reason for writing this work was as follows :

In reply to the arguments put forward by Bengalee social reformers in favour of widow-remarriage, Bengalees belonging to the orthodox school induced Rajaram to enquire into the legitimacy of widow-remarriage according to Hindu scriptures and to give his opinions regarding the question. Rajaram made a thorough study of the Mimamsa and Dharmashastra and quoted scriptures both in favour and against widow-

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remarriage, finally deciding against remarriage. He also collected the opinions of as many as 52 pandits who shared his views and these names have been mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi*. It is said that the composition pleased J. R. Ballantyne, Principal of the Sanskrit College, so much that he appointed Rajaram Professor of Samkhya. Later on, he was appointed Dharmashastra Department's Head in 1863 by Mr Griffith, the next Principal.[166] The following is the list of the pandits who supported the view against widow-remarriage and who, in all probability, lived in Varanasi :[167]

Kaliprasad Sharma
Krishna Dev Devsharma Sarvabhouma
Ganesh Shastri
Gangaram Shastri
Girija Shankar Pathak
Gopal Krishna Sama Yajnik
Ghanashyam Mishra
Guljar Sharma
Chandradhar Sharma Ojha Maithil
Chandradev Sharma Vidyalankar
Jayram Sharma Bhatt
(Rajguru) Jibnath Panditraj
Thakurdas Devaswami Nyayapanchanan
Tulsidas Ojha
Durgashankar Pathak Pandit
Durgadatta Sharma
Narayan Meghankar
Narayan Shastri Kunte
Purushottam Shastri Yoga
Prayagadatta Sharma Tripathi
Vaidyanath Bhatta Vishwarup
Veniram Sharma Shesh
Vishwanath Sharma Hardikar
Vitthal Pandit
Bastiram Sharma Dwivedi
Vaidyanath Pathak Agnihotri
Bhagavaticharan Devasharma
Bholanath Sharma Upadhyay

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Mathuranath Shukla
Manorath Sharma
Ramshastri Bhatta
Ramsharan Tarkapanchanan
Ramchandra Sharma Dharmadhikari
Lakshmikanta Pandit
Lakshmi Shankar Sharma Vyas
Shambhu Sharma Chaturdhar
Shalagram Upadhyay
Shankar Shastri
Sakharam Bhatta
Shrijhumak Sharma Ojha
Sundar Sharma
Siddheshwarnath Sharma
Haricharan Pandit
Haranarayan Tarkalankar
Hirananda Sharma

Ranganath : A Court-Astrologer at the Ramnagar Fort Palace during the time of Raja Chet Singh.[168]

Ranganath Shastri : A Nepali pandit living in Varanasi in the early nineteenth century, his teacher was Pandit Gangaram Tripathi. During this period, King Ranbahadur Shah of Nepal, being compelled to quit his kingdom, was living at Varanasi. Pandit Gangaram Shastri arranged to have a loan of forty thousand rupees given to Ranbahadur from one of the famous banking houses of the City, called Trilokshi Amarsi, with himself as guarantor. With this money, Ranbahadur went back to Nepal, reclaimed the throne and appointed Pandit Ranganath his Chief Minister.[169]

Ramprasad Vidyavagish : He was a Bengalee pandit who helped Jayanarayan Ghoshal to translate *Kashi Khandam* into Bengali[170].

Rajnarayan Tarkasiddhanta : He was a Bengalee pandit who lived in the City around 1857.[171]

Raghubir Tarka Panchanan :[172] He too was a Bengalee pandit living in the City at the same time as the above.

Rakhal Das Chattopadhyay : A Bengalee pandit whose father was Jadavendranath Chattopadhyay, Rakhaldas opened a pathashala in Kashi. When the Bengali Tola School was started, he joined as a teacher. Later on

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he studied astronomy at the Sanskrit College and was awarded the degree of *Surya Siddhanta*. He was appointed a Professor to the Sanskrit College when Becharam Sarvabhouma retired.[173]

Rameshwar : Possibly, he belonged to the period under review. He was the author of the following :

Vidhivivekam;
A gloss on the *Sutras*.[174]

Lakshmipat Joshi (1748-1820) : A Parvatiya Brahmin, he was Professor of Jyotisha at the Sanskrit College when it was started in 1791. He was highly proficient in *Siddhanta Jyotisha*, *Patiganit* and *Bijganit*. Among his notable students were, Pandit Krishnadev, also his son, Pandit Shivalal, and Pandit Durgashankar Pathak.[175]

Ramaswami Ayar : He either lived in the City or visited around 1750. He wrote *Kashiyatrakramam*, a religious account of Varanasi of the same year.[176]

Lajjashankar Pandit (1804-1859) : A *Moḍh* Brahmin of Gujarat, he learnt Jyotisha from Pandit Lakshmipati Pathak and Durgapati Pathak.[177] He became a Professor at the Sanskrit College in 1844 and his name is mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* of Rajaram.[178]

Lakshminarayan (Kavindra) : He emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century. *Kavindra Lakshminarayanajivanacharitam*, written by Deviprasada, is his biography.[179]

Lakshmidevi : She was the wife of Vaidyanath and mother of Balasharman. She authored the following :

Balamabhatti, a commentary on the *Mitakshara*;[180]
Kalamadhavatika;[181]
Mitaksharavivriti;[182]
Kalamadhavalakshmi[183], a work on the Dharmashastra.

Lalla Dikshit : He was the son of Lakshmana Dikshit, who belonged to a Maratha family that settled in Varanasi and used the surnames, Morvanikara and Bandhokara. He earned the title of 'Kavindra Bahadur'.[184] He wrote *Anandamandirastotram*, a hymn on Devi (Divine Mother) in 1802.

Shyamananda Bhattacharya : The son of Pandit Kashinath Bhattacharya, the first Principal of the Sanskrit College, he was appointed first Professor of Dharmashastra to the same college when it was opened in 1791.[185]

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Shobha Shastri : He was appointed Professor of Mimamsa at the Sanskrit College in 1791.[186]

Shivnath Pandit : A Professor at the Sanskrit College in its early phase.[187]

Shambhuchandra Bhattacharya Vidyasagar : A Bengalee Pandit who opened a pathashala in the City around 1850, he taught Nyaya, Smriti and Jyotisha. Pandit Kalikumar Vachaspati was his son.[188]

Shambhu Vidyalankar : A Bengalee Pandit who lived in the City around 1850.[189]

Sevaram Sharma : A disciple of Pandit Balakrishna Jyotishi, a famous astrologer, he too was a great astrologer.[190] His name was mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* of Rajaram.[191]

Sakharam Bhatta : His name was mentioned in the *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi* of Rajaram.[192] He took part in the shastrartha held in Gurudas Mitra's house in 1876.

Siddheshwar Sharma : He too participated in the aforementioned shastrartha and his name was mentioned by Rajaram Sharma in his *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi*.[193]

Hirananda Choube : A Professor of Sahitya at the Sanskrit College in 1836,[194] he was also one of the signatories to a *vyavasthapatra* on sea-voyages issued by the Varanasi pandits in 1836.[195] He was perhaps identical with Pandit Hirananda Sharma whose name was mentioned in the *Vidhavodvohashankasamadhi* of Rajaram.[196]

Hirananda Chaturvedi : A student of Pandit Durgashankar Pathak, he was appointed Senior Professor of Sahitya at the Sanskrit College.[197]

Hariharananda Tirtha Swami (Kulabadhut) :[198] Formerly Nandakumar Vidyalankar, this scholar of Nyaya and Tantra later took sannyasa. Born in 1762 in Bengal, he came to Varanasi in 1812 where he passed away on January 17, 1832. From an obituary published on February 11, 1832, in the *Samachar Darpan* of Calcutta, it has been learnt that many people of Calcutta and Varanasi, including the Kashi Naresh, were consecrated by him. The people of Varanasi had great reverence for him.[199] He composed *Kularnaba Tantram*, a commentary on the *Mahanirvana Tantram*.*

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* For further details on Hariharananda Tirtha Swami, see Chapter VI.

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Harishastri Ranade : He lived at the Trilochan Ghat during the 1840s and was a scholar of Kavya. Pandit Rajaram Shastri was one of his famous students.[200]

Hati or **Hatu Vidyalankar** :[201] A famous female Bengalee Sanskrit scholar, she migrated to Varanasi around the beginning of the nineteenth century from East Bengal after she was widowed. She was well-versed in Sanskrit and was engaged in teaching in Varanasi, which was quite unique among her contemporaries. She was highly respected for her great erudition and like other Brahmin scholars, partook in *shraddha* and similar socio-religious ceremonies.

Harikuwar (alias Maji Baba) : This nun (sannyasini) was well-versed in the Vedas and Yoga and was referred to as Gargi, the legendary woman-scholar of the Vedic India, for her scholarship.[202] She passed away in 1850.

Hari Dikshit : A Maharashtrian scholar and son of Keshava Dikshit, he was a great grammarian and in 1797 wrote *Kashika*, which explained the *Vaiakaranabhushanasaram* of Kondabhatta.[203]

Hari Dikshit : The grandson of Bhattoji Dikshit[204] of Varanasi, he lived around the beginning of the nineteenth century. He was perhaps the teacher of Nagesha or Nagoji Bhatta, another descendant of Bhattoji Dikshit. He wrote *Laghushavdaratnam*, a commentary on the *Manorama* of Bhattoji Dikshit, his grandfather.

Hariprasad Panita or **Pantha** : A poet patronized by Raja Chet Singh,[205] he translated into elegant Sanskrit verse the poetical works of Biharilal, who flourished at the court of Amber, Rajasthan, towards the beginning of the sixteenth century. Hariprasad was also the author of seven hundred couplets.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE AUTHORS AND THEIR WORKS

The following is a synopsis of the foregoing authors and their Sanskrit works in the form of two tables which will help us to make our observations.

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TABLE-1

Approximate number of authors writing the approximate number of works.

Authors	Works	Total
20	1	20
9	2	18
3	3	9
3	4	12
2	5	10
1	7	7
1	10	10
1	11	11
1	14	4
1	21	21
1	48	48
1	82	82

Total no. of authors : **44** Total no. of works : **262**

TABLE-2

Number of Authors (subjectwise)
(Original and/or Commentary)

No. of Authors	Subject	No. of Authors	Subject
8	Vyakarana (Grammar)	2	Vedas & Vedic rituals
6	Dharmashastra	5	Kavya (Poetry)
2	Vedanta	5	Stotras (Hymns)
1	Nitishastra (Ethics)	2	Jyotisha (Astrology)
1	Commentary on Stotra	1	Jyotirvidya (Astronomy)
2	Biography	5	Tirtha & Tirthayatra (Pilgrimage)
2	Samgita (Song) & Vadya (Music)	3	Tantra
1	Nritya (Dance)	1	Travelogue
3	Bhaktishastra	2	Nataka (Drama)
2	Nyaya	1	Chhanda (Prosody)
1	Western Philosophy	2	Miscellaneous

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This list of pandits and their works is not exhaustive but is as complete as the available data would allow. Again, there is the possibility of overlapping of titles in certain cases.

These issues notwithstanding, we have seen that 262 books were written by 44 authors with most of the scholars writing one or two works and there were only a few who attempted more than two works. There were a few authors who wrote quite a lot, such as Krishna Bhatta who produced as many as 82 and Kalishankar Bhattacharya 48. Most of these efforts, however, were either *tika* or *kroḍapatras* and the like, and were restricted to a specified field like Nyaya.

There were, of course, a few authors who, though they did not produce much, covered varied subjects. Kashthajihva Swami wrote on the Vedas and Ethics and also composed hymns; Balasharma Paugondia wrote on Vyakarana, Dharmashastra, Bhaktishastra, and the glory of Kashi, and Bapudeva Shastri wrote on astrology, astronomy, and the glory of places of pilgrimage.

The favourite subjects of the authors were Vyakarana, Dharmashastra, Stotras, Tirthamahatmyam (especially that of Kashi), Kavya, Bhaktishastra, Tantra, Nyaya, and Mimamsa. Subjects like Vedic rituals, ethics, astrology, astronomy, music, dance, drama, biographies, travelogues, also received the attention of the authors though not as much. Western philosophy and secular subjects like rural quarrels[206] were also explored.[207]

It appears that serious and important subjects like the Upanishads, Vedanta and other schools of philosophy, excepting Mimamsa, Nyaya, and Ayurveda, were rarely attempted. Again, the number of secondary works, such as commentaries and *kroḍapatras*, far outnumbered the original works that inspired them.

There were also certain compilations written in collaboration with a host of scholars. The *Vidhavodvahashankasamadhi, Dharmashastrasamgraham*, and *Ahnikaprayogasamgraham*, credited to Rajaram Shastri, Balasharman Paugondia, and Parashuram Pathak respectively, were all collaborative efforts.

Finally, it is remarkable that there was at least one woman on record among the forty-four authors of our period that were identified. Her name was Lakshmidevi, the wife of Pandit Vaidyanath Bhatta and the mother of Pandit Balasharman Paugondia, both of whom received mention in this chapter as well.*

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* It is important to note that most of the works mentioned here are, unfortunately, still in manuscripts in different locations and only a few among them have been published so far.

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WESTERN SCHOLARS AND THE SANSKRIT LEARNING

The culture of Sanskrit language and literature was not confined to the local pandits alone. Some Western scholars, mainly British, also showed special interest in this field. Of course, necessity was the mother of such interest, for the British imperialists at the outset had found difficulties in administering justice as they had no idea about the current system of law that governed the majority of their Indian subjects, that is, the Hindus. Consequently, they had to depend upon the services of the pandits. To remove that difficulty, Warren Hastings approached a group of pandits who obliged him by compiling the *Vivadarnavasetu* from the Dharmashastras for his purpose. This document was then translated into Persian by a *Maulavi*, and finally, from Persian into English by N. B. Halhed under the title *Gentoo Law*. The monograph was later published in England in 1776.

Europeans, who pioneered promoting an understanding between the ruler and the ruled in India and between East and West, then took the next significant step in the direction of cultural appreciation with the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal by Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones in Calcutta in 1781. Jones's deep interest in Sanskrit inspired a band of Western scholars who devoted their time and energy, and in some cases, their entire lives to the pursuit of Sanskrit learning.

WILLIAM JONES AND WILKINS

Varanasi, being one of the traditional seats of Sanskrit learning, obviously attracted many Western Sanskrit scholars such as Wilkins. But unfortunately, in most cases the history of their noble ventures in the City is not known. Sir William Jones was thought to have visited Varanasi.[208] But Wilkins, who was a Senior Merchant in the service of the Government and became known as 'the Nestor of Sanskrit studies'[209] actually came to the City in the early 1780s. He lived in a portion of the Shivala Ghat Palace that was once the residence of Raja Chet Singh.[210] It was not possible for Wilkins to gain easy access to Sanskrit study in the orthodox environment of Varanasi because pandits at first refused to assist him in his academic pursuits. Finally, Kashinath Bhattacharya, a Bengalee pandit who later became the first Principal of the Benares Sanskrit College, came to his rescue and extended unlimited help and co-operation in his effort to compile and translate the *Mahabharatam*. This service rendered to Wilkins by Kashinath was duly recognized when the latter was granted *jageer* by Warren Hastings.[211]

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Though at the outset pandits had not been well-disposed to inquisitive European Scholars, certain libraries of Sanskrit manuscripts became accessible to Wilkins, Captain Wilford and others when the early restrictions in this respect slowly wore away with time.

JOHN GILCHRIST AND H. T. COLEBROOKE

John Gilchrist from Calcutta, after completing the manuscript of the first volume of a work (name unknown) in which he had been 'assiduously' employed for three years, wanted to take up the writing of a second and third volume of that work in 1781. For that, he requested the Government to allow him to reside somewhere in a *zamindari* of Varanasi or, if necessary, in the *Suba* of Oudh. He further requested, interestingly enough, that he be permitted to cultivate indigo to compensate for his labour. Gilchrist's entreaty was granted so far as Varanasi was concerned, but the Board had no authority with respect to his proposed residence in Oudh or for the cultivation of indigo there, as that region had not yet come under its jurisdiction.[212] The outcome of Gilchrist's proposal and whether or not he finally came to Varanasi is not known.

H. T. Colebrooke, compiler of *The Digest of Hindu Laws*, better known as *Colebrooke's Digest*, contacted Varanasi pandits among others to aid in compiling and translating. He commissioned Balambhatta (Balasharman) Paygunde, son of Vaidyanath Paygunde of Varanasi, to prepare the *Dharmashastrasamgraha*. In 1797, Colebrooke was appointed to superintend the compilation of a supplement to the Digest and was to receive Rs. 850 for the compilation and a sum of Rs. 100 per month as a personal allowance during the time employed in overseeing and translating the work. That he was to stay in Varanasi during this time is apparent since the necessary terms and conditions of Colebrooke's appointment were made known to Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident of Varanasi.[213]

JONATHAN DUNCAN AND W. A. BROOKE

Though Jonathan Duncan was not himself a Sanskrit scholar, he served the cause of Sanskrit learning by being instrumental in setting up the the Sanskrit College in 1791. Illustrious orientalists such as Wilford, Galanos and Wilson were either in management or on the College Committee at different times. W. A. Brooke, who was an Agent to the Governor-General in Varanasi and who resided in the City for a long period, was President of the College Committee. He knew Sanskrit well and composed a poem that

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was recited on the occasion of Duncan's first visit to the College on November 17, 1791.[214]

COLONEL WILFORD

Colonel Wilford, who had almost 'Hindooized' himself living in Varanasi from 1788 to 1822,[215] is a remarkable name in the field of Sanskrit learning for his indefatigable scholarship. Wilford, who was a Swiss scholar and had come to India as a private soldier, shortly obtained a commission in the Engineers. He had at first devoted himself to geographical writings, but his devotion to the study of Sanskrit was far more captivating. His mode of life in the City was described in the *Calcutta Review*[216] thus : 'When over seventy years of age he lived at Benares giving the whole day to study, and not ashamed of having hung up in his room the musket he had used fifty years before.'

Wilford was appointed a member of 'the Committee of three' for superintending the functioning of the Benares Sanskrit College in 1798.[217] Wilford was the only member of this Committee with the requisite knowledge of Sanskrit to undertake such work and offer suitable recommendations, when necessary.[218]*

Wilford passed away on September 3, 1822, in Varanasi, and his death was regarded as an irreparable loss to lovers of Sanskrit. The *Samachar Darpan*, a Bengali Journal of Calcutta, mourned his death in an obituary published on September 21,1822.[219] From this obituary it is known that Wilford had been a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal from its beginning and that he had received all kinds of favours from both Warren Hastings and William Jones in his study of Sanskrit. Wilford, who mingled the dust of his mortal body with the soil of a foreign land he had taken as his own, was buried in the English burial ground at Secrole, where a monument was later raised in his memorey.[220]

DEMETRIUS GALANOS

Like Wilford, there was also a Greek scholar, Demetrius Galanos, who also dedicated his whole life to the study of Sanskrit. But these two scholars had dissimilarities too. While Wilford wrote in English and was patronized by the British Government, Galanos wrote in Greek and had practically no such patronization.

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* Details of Wilford's role in the management of the College have been given in Chapter XIII.

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Bishop Heber, who had only heard about Galanos, during his Indian travel, was struck by 'the singularity and mystery of his character and situation'.[221] No other contemporary European or Indian traveller mentioned anything about him or his life and works in Varanasi. Some references to Galonos, though very scanty, have been found in Government records with regard to his appointment to the Benares Sanskrit College. The voluminous papers, including letters, left by Galanos and explored so far, also do not throw much light on him or his activities in Varanasi.[222] Thus, though Galanos lived in Varanasi for a long time, which was in itself unusual, we know very little about that.

Galanos was born in Athens in 1760. He distinguished himself at the public school in Athens and by the age of fourteen had exhausted all that the primary educational resources Athens had to offer.[223] He received further education in Mesolonghi, then went on to a reputed school on the island of Patmos for six years.

His uncle, Gregory, Bishop of Caesaria and Primate of the Holy Synod of Constantinople, wanted him to take Holy Orders, but Galanos declined, as he was determined to devote his life to the study of Greek literature and Philosophy. He lived in Constantinople and started giving lessons in Greek.

At that time, Greeks traded as far as India resulting in Greek communities, though small in size, flourishing in Calcutta and Dacca. These communities, being desirous of a Greek education for their children, naturally wanted a Greek teacher. Accordingly, Constantine Pantazes, head of the Calcutta's Greek community and a wealthy merchant, requested his correspondent in Constantinople to send a Greek teacher to Calcutta. In response to this request Galanos was sent to India, arriving in Calcutta in April of 1788.[224] He lived with Pantazes and started teaching young Greeks their mother tongue first in Calcutta and then in Dacca.

Galanos, already interested in language and literature, devoted himself to the study of Sanskrit, Persian, and English and possibly, Bengali and Hindustani. In addition to learning languages, he successfully engaged himself in business activities, enabling him to live in Varanasi for a long time and to bequeath a substantial amount for the creation of the University of Athens in his will.

Though Galanos learnt many languages, it was Greek and Sanskrit that received his greatest attention. He had quit his job in Bengal after a seven-year stay and left the place in 1795 on health grounds.[225] After that time he visited many places in Upper India, finally retiring to Varanasi in 1799 to

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devote himself exclusively to the study of Sanskrit *vis-à-vis* Greek and Hindu Philosophy.[226]

Here Galanos embraced the plain living and high thinking lifestyle of an orthodox Brahmin pandit. He spent more than three decades engaged in studying Hindu scriptures, translating them into Greek and other literary work with a single-minded devotion till his death. All these dedicated activities made him unique among European Indologists, and won for him the love, respect, and appreciation of the local people. His preceptor was one Kandardasa (Kedara Dasa?) while his pandit was Sue (Shiva ?) Ram and his Munshi was Shital Singh, a Khatri by caste and a great Persian scholar of his time. Moreover, in his establishment there were one Christian and two Muslim attendants.[227]

Though Galanos was well mannered, sociable and could speak English well, he had little social intercourse with the British Government circle, who looked upon him with an eye of suspicion. According to one report, the Government had him under surveillance for a long period, but their suspicions turned into appreciation when Galanos helped convey important pieces of information during the first Pindaree War in 1817. Galanos also contributed Rs. 20 for the construction of a church at Secrole in 1815.[228] That the English communities of Varanasi and Allahabad respected and appreciated Galanos was corroborated by Bishop Heber. Galanos also befriended a Russian trader named Peter Federoff in whose memory he dedicated a tombstone in the Chauka Ghat Cemetery of Varanasi in 1825.

Galanos was appointed Superintendent of Pupils' Studies at the Sanskrit College of Varanasi for a few years, that is from 1815 to perhaps 1819.* On May 20, 1815, while recommending him for the post, W. W. Bird, the Magistrate of Varanasi and a member of the College Committee, made the following observation on him :

> 'Appointing a person of respectability well acquainted with the principles of education and instructed in European and oriental science, personally to superintend these details to afford the committee such information as it may require and to bring to notice every circumstance that may call for the interference of its authority, such a person is to be found in Mr. Demetrius Galanos, a Greek who was resident long at this place, employed in the study of oriental literature.
>
> His conduct has even been most unexceptionable and I believe him to be sincerely attached to the interest of the Goverment. Such a man would be of incalculable use both to the committee and to the college.'[229]

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* For further details, see the account of the Benares Sanskrit College in Chapater XIII.

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This recommendation by Bird was accompanied by an autobiographic letter from Galanos, which was originally addressed to the Magistrate of Benares in 1810 being called upon to report to him. This interesting letter is quoted below in its entirety :

'I was born in Athens and after finishing my classical education I was called by my uncle who was Archbishop of Cappadacia, residing then in Constantinople; being fond of seeing foreign countries and different nations contrary to my uncle's wishes, I left Constantinople and was engaged as a Grammarian to a rich Greek merchant's children in Dacca. I came by land to Bassorah and thence on board a ship landed in Calcutta at the beginning of April in the year 1788.

I stayed at Dacca till the end of the year 1795 when being not well I came to Patna for a change of air. From Patna, I came here, hence I went to Lucknow, and thence to Faizabad and Ajudea (Oudh) the birthplace of the famous Rama. I came back again to Lucknow and thence to Benares, where I began to learn the Sanskrit language. But being indisposed I went down to Calcutta where I was acquainted with Doctor James Dinividdic, who wishing to travel through Egypt and Greece, requested me many times to accompany him. When the news came that the French under Napolean Bonaparte had invaded Egypt, Doctor Dinividdic abandoned his former intention and I resolved at the same time to come back to Benares and continued my studies in Sanskrit.

Recommended by a letter of Doctor Dinividdic and Doctor Hunter to Major (then Captain) Wilford and to Mr. S. Davis, then Judge and Magistrate, I arrived here about 15 days before the Vizier Allyi's rebellion (around January 1, 1799); where I lived till now, looking on my books, in peace and tranquillity under the protection of the English Government, to whom I wish happiness, successes and glory in every part of the world.'

This short but informative letter from Galanos about himself is revealing. While it corroborates most of the data his biographers have furnished about him so far, it gives some additional pieces of information. For example, his desire to visit foreign countries was also another reason for his advent in India in addition to his mission of educating the Greek children here.

This letter also reveals, contrary to what was believed, that he arrived in Calcutta in 1788, not in 1786; while in Bengal he stayed mainly in Dacca, not in Calcutta; he left his residence in Bengal for health reasons, not for the study of Sanskrit; he left in 1795, not 1792; and he lived in Varanasi for thirty-four consecutive years from 1799, not for forty years .

In view of his intercourse and identification with the local people and his reverence for the Hindu religion and culture, it was believed by some that he had been converted to Hinduism. The Greek Philosophical

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periodical *Prodomos* once remarked that Galanos 'became a Brahmin' and was honoured as a scholar and saint by Indians and Europeans alike. But despite his love and respect for Hindu Philosophy and Hindu way of life he remained a faithful Christian to the last, and he specified Rs 800 in his will for burying his body and erecting a monument.

Towards the end of his life he had intended to return to Athens and had written to his nephew Pantoleon Galanos inviting him to India to accompany him during his return-journey. Finally, when Pantoleon arrived in Calcutta and was about to start for Varanasi, the news reached him that his esteemed uncle had passed away on May 3, 1833 after a short illness.

In observance of his last wish, Galanos was buried according to Christian rites. The simple inscription on his tomb in the English cemetery at Varanasi reads as follows :[230]

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY OF
DEMETRIUS GALANOS
AN ATHENIAN WHO DIED AT BENARES
IN THE EAST INDIES ON THE 3rd OF MAY 1833
AGED 72 YEARS

Shital Singh, the 'bosom friend and Master' of Galanos inscribed an epitaph on his tomb in Hindi which may be translated as follows :

'Woe, a hundred times woe!
Demetrius Galanos has left this world to reside in the eternal abodes.
With tears and wailing I have cried out, ah me! by grief demented.
He is gone, alas, the Plato of this age.'

Galanos's name was also mentioned in the Register of Burials of 1833 under the heading 'Burials within the chaplaincy station of the District of Benares.' Galanos was so popular and respected by the local people that they would remember him with love and reverence even a century after his passing away.[231]

Like some of his European counterparts, Galanos also played an important role in carrying the treasure of Sanskrit learning to the West, but he is unique in that he has been the only Greek scholar with no predecessor or successor to date, to lead an Indian lifestyle of nearly three and a half decades devoting himself fully to the study of Sanskrit, single-handedly translating a number of important books directly from Sanskrit to Greek.

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The Greek scholars who visited India during or soon after Alexander's invasion (including Megasthenes) did not undertake the volume of work that was completed by Galanos alone. During the Medieval Period, such attempts by any Greek were perhaps not made at all. Galanos's translations from Sanskrit into Greek included the following works :

Niti & Vairagyashatakam of Bhartrihari, printed in 1845;
Laghuchanakyam, printed in 1845;
Bhaminivilasam of Panditraj Jagannatha, printed in 1845;
Balabharatam of Amarachandra, a synopsis of the *Mahabharatam*, printed in 1847;
Bhagavad-Gita, printed in 1848;
Raghuvamsham of Kalidasa, printed in 1850;
Hitopadesham, printed in 1851;
Itihasasamuchchayam, a collection of episodes from the *Mahabharatam*, printed in 1851;
Devi Mahatmyam (*Durga saptashati*), printed in 1853;
Shuka saptati;
Bhagavata Puranam.

These translations also contain copious notes constituting 'a veritable store-house of Indian lore'. These notes 'interpret allegories, supply historical data, elucidate mythological traditions, explain the names and attributes of Indian deities, give parallel passages from Greek philosophers; account for obscure beliefs and popular sayings.'

Galanos also made drafts of several lexicons and dictionaries such as Pali-Greek, Persian-Hindi-Greek-English, and Sanskrit-Greek, which have proved to be pioneering and at the same time useful to the scholars of comparative literature, religion and philosophy.

In 1823, Galanos was visited by Captain Kephalas, a fellow Greek, in whom he had put great confidence and trust for obvious reason. At Kephalas's request, Galanos sent through him the translation of a work of Chanakya, the great statesman and thinker of Ancient India, with the original Sanskrit text to be delivered to the 'Greek authorities in the Peloponnesus'. But Kephalas was not so trustworthy as Galanos had considered him to be. He gave Galanos's manuscript to the Vatican Library and then published it under his own name. Thus Galanos had been deprived of the credit of introducing Chanakya for the first time before Europe till the fact was finally disclosed.[232]

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One of Galanos's biographers has made the following assessment of him :

> 'Although one of the earliest and ablest pioneers of Indology, he personally laid no claim to any literary achievement, he published nothing during his lifetime, but followed the dictates of true philosophy—not a self-asserting philosophy, practised as some kind of craft, and proclaimed as the working of the marvels; but such as Plutarch so pithily defines, after the models of Socrates and Pythagoras and Arcesilaus and Carneades.
>
> They did not pass their lives in the elaboration of axioms nor in the refinement of syllogisms. But they were acknowledged and honoured as philosophers for the wise words they spoke, the lessons they taught, and, above all, for the manner of life they themselves led; thus setting the example of a pure, unselfish, unpretentious, blameless existence, benevolent to all men, tolerant of all things, save wrong of any kind. Such, indeed, was the life of our Demetrius Galanos'.[233]

Galanos was sometimes compared with Socrates and Plato. Though Galanos lacked the originality of those two great Greek philosophers, he was distinguished in other respects. His adventurous spirit, tenacious and single-minded devotion to the cultivation of learning, profound scholarship, literary achievements, pioneering role in Indo-Greek studies, love for his motherland and also for India, which became his second motherland, and finally, his plain and unostentatious style of living are all remarkable. For all these, Galanos will occupy a special position in the literary history of India and Greece.

H. H. WILSON

Dr H. H. Wilson is a remarkable name in the educational history of nineteenth century India. He was an illustrious scholar of Sanskrit and English and also an enthusiastic reformer in the field of education. While he was in Varanasi, he was appointed a member of the Committee of the Sanskrit College. In 1820, along with Captain Fell, he was specially empowered to probe into the affairs of the College and to offer suggestions for improvements. Accordingly, they conducted thorough investigations and sent findings in the form of reports to the College Committee, the details of which have been discussed in Chapter XIII.

EDWARD FELL

Captain Edward Fell was in the military service of the British Government and was stationed in Varanasi. Fell was appointed a Member of the Committee of Benares College. The fact of his being empowered to investigate into the affairs of the said college along with Dr Wilson, and

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interview students on the subject of their studies suggest that he was also well versed in Sanskrit.

J. MUIR

J. Muir, a scholar of Sanskrit, was appointed the first European Principal of the the Sanskrit College in April of 1844, and worked there for little more than a year. He brought about various reforms regarding the internal administration of the College, especially, regarding the syllabus that was in vogue here, and issued notices and circulars of the College in Sanskrit. He was also an author of a number of Sanskrit works, not merely works of translation like most of his European predecessors and successors, but original works. Most probably, they were written for the use of Indian students in particular and the Indian public in general. These works include :

Itihasadipika, a sketch of the history of India in verse;[234]
Vyavaharalokam (Allahabad, 1845), brief lectures on Mental Philosophy and other subjects delivered in Sanskrit to the students of the Sanskrit College;[235]
Matapariksha (1840);
Sharmapaddhati (1841);
Shri Jeshukhrishta-Mahatmyam (1848), a biography of Jesus Christ;
Shri Paula Charitram (1850), a biography of St. Paul.

J. R. BALLANTYNE

Though Reverend Wallis succeeded Muir in the post of Principal and worked for a short period, he had no knowledge of Sanskrit .The next Principal of the college, Dr J. R. Ballantyne, was a profound scholar of Sanskrit and also a successful administrator. His tenure (1846-1861) as Principal was marked by his manifold activities, ranging from the introduction of various changes in the College to the production of monographs, and at the same time, inspiring other scholars to undertake the work of writing. Thus, Ballantyne ushered in a new phase in the history of the Benares Sanskrit College.* His works include :

Nyaya Kaumudi, a synopsis of Science in Sanskrit and English.[236] It consists of lectures on the sub-divisions of knowldege and their mutual relations, delivered at the Sanskrit College;

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* For details on Ballantyne's role as the Sanskrit College's Principal, see Chapter XIII.

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Khrishtadharmakaumudi, showing Christianity contrasted with Hindu philosophy.[237] Brajalal Mukhopadhyay of Calcutta made a critical review of this work in his *Khrishtadharmakaumudi-samalochana*;[238]

Samkhya Aphorisms of Kapila;

Physical Science, compiled in1851 and printed for use in the Benares Sanskrit College;

The Aphorisms of the Yoga Philosophy, 1852;

The Methods of Induction, edited in 1852;

Metaphysics and Mental Philosophy;

The Laghu Kaumudi of Varadaraja, ed. and tr.;

Elements of Logic Extracted from the Works of Richard Whately, 1853;

The Aphorisms of the Mimamsa Philosophy, ed. and tr. in 1851;

The Aphorisms of Vaisheshika Philosophy of Kanada, ed. and tr. in 1851;

First Lessons of Sanskrit Grammar;

Chapters on Political Economy : Adapted from Archbishop Whately and De Quincey's Logic of Political Economy, 1854;

The Bhasha Parichhedam of Vishwanatha, ed. and tr. in 1851;

Lectures on the sub-division of knowledge and their mutual relations, compiled in 1848;

Lectures on the Nyaya Philosophy, embracing the text of Tarka Samgraham,1849, printed for use in the Benares Sanskrit College;

A Lecture on the Vedanta, embracing the text of the Vedantasaram, 1850, printed for use in the Benares Sanskrit College.[239]

Under the direction of Ballantyne, Vitthal Shastri wrote *Panchabhuta-vadartham* (1859), which contains lectures on the chemistry of the five elements, the Hindus believe in. Vitthal Shastri's explanatory version of Bacon's *Novum Organum* was also perhaps written at the instance of Ballantyne.

Fitzedward Hall, a distinguished Indologist and philologist, was the sole American scholar of Sanskrit to live in Varanasi during our period. He was also perhaps the first American, and surely the first American scholar, to have lived in this City and was a pioneer of those of his

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countrymen who would later sojourn here in various pursuits, including academic.*

Born in Troy, New York in 1825, Hall took a degree in civil engineering in 1842 and then entered Harvard College where he studied for another four years. During these years mathematics, natural sciences, and especially languages formed his main academic pursuits. In fact, he is said to have acquired a fair knowledge of French and Spanish when he was only sixteen and here mastered German . It is further claimed that the output of his German translations, all published anonymously, could have filled three good sized volumes.

In 1846 Hall was persuaded by his father to journey to India in search of his brother who had 'run away to sea.'** Accordingly, he set sail in a merchant ship from Boston to Calcutta. As misfortune would have it, the vessel was shipwrecked on September 16th of that year not far from the mouth of the Ganga. Hall, then a young man of only twenty-one years, found himself in a most pitiable condition, having lost everything with the ship, but received help from various quarters in Calcutta. Under such circumstances an immediate return to America was impossible and his forced detention in Calcutta was to change the course of his adult life.

His special aptitude and natural ability in learning languages further manifested here, where he found sufficient leisure to pursue the tongues of this land in which destiny had placed him. Initially, he took some lessons in Hindusthani and Persian 'to resolve on exploring at least those

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* 'The number of students in indology (in the nineteenth century) always remained small and the field was seen as esoteric. ...

The content, focus, and personnel of the first century of American indology came from German universities concentrated on Vedic and classical Sanskrit texts, and was primarily armchair in nature—few sanskritists ventured to do fieldwork in India, the land of their studies. ...' Maureen L. P. Patterson : *Institutional Base for the Study of South Asia in the United States and the Role of the American Institute of Indian Studies*, p.20. *India's World and U. S. Scholars (1947-1997)*, ed., Joseph W. Elder and others : Manohar and the American Institute of Indian Studies, New Delhi, 1998.

The second American Sanskrit scholar to visit Varanasi was possibly Maurice Bloomfield (1855-1928), who was born in Bielitz (now Bielsko, Poland) but educated in America. Later Bloomfield was appointed Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at John Hopkins. *The American People's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, p. 231, Grolier Incorporated, New York, 1966.

** *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 13, p. 717, Grolier Incorporated, Danbury, U.S.A., 1991.

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languages' and 'the pleasure which he found in them led to his postponing indefinitely his departure homewards.' He also undertook the study of Bengali and, especially Sanskrit, the latter to become his main subject of pursuit. It is worth mentioning that also to support himself during his stay in Calcutta he worked as a freelance writer for local journals, quite a few of which were published in English. He contributed both original articles and translations in prose and verse from French, Italian and modern Greek.

After about three years' stay in Calcutta he moved on to Ghazipore for five months. His next destination was Varanasi, where he arrived on January 16, 1850, perhaps to explore the culture of Sanskrit more intensively. In the following month, 'without any solicitation of his own,' he was appointed as a tutor in the Anglo-Sanskrit Department at the Benares Sanskrit College introduced in 1847-48. He was later appointed to a full professorship here in 1853. Hall served at this College until July 1855, when he left Varanasi for a new posting. During his stay in the City two very important incidents of his life took place: first was his narrow escape from death in a massive explosion of gunpowder loaded onto thirty-four boats on May 1, 1850, just within four months of his arrival;* the second was his marriage to the daughter of a high-ranking British Army Officer in 1854 that was formally held in Delhi.

While in Varanasi, Hall, in addition to teaching at the Sanskrit College, undertook the editing of at least two Sanskrit works, namely *Atmabodha* with its Commentary, and *Tattwabodha*, published in 1852, and is thus credited with becoming the 'first American to edit a Sanskrit text.' Hall also composed *Refutation of Hindu Philosophical Systems*, an English translation of *Shaḍdarshana Darpana*, a Hindi work, authored by Reverend Nehmiah Goreh, a Varanasi Pandit who was converted to Christianity and refuted Hindu philosophy from a Christian standpoint in this work.** The book, however, was published in 1862, that is, a few years after his quitting Varanasi. Also to his credit, Hall made some interesting discoveries of Buddhist relics at the excavated sites of Saranath.***

Hall was appointed Inspector of Schools for Ajmer and Marwar and Superintendent of Ajmer Government School for a little over fifteen months. He was then transferred to Sagar in the Central Provinces in 1856,

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* For details of this explosion, see Chapter XIX.

** For details, see Christianity in Chapter VI.

*** Sherring, *Benares*, p. 236.

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again as Inspector of Schools, until he finally left India and emigrated to England in 1862.

During his tenure in Sagar he journeyed for a period of about a year and a half, when he visited both Europe and America. There in America, he must have reunited with his parents and relatives in Troy after eleven eventful and momentous years—a period during which the unknown lad from Troy had been transformed into an established family man and a scholar of considerable repute abroad—having tread such uncommon ground.*

We get some rare and personal reminiscences regarding Hall in Varanasi left by John B. Ireland, another American, who travelled to the City from the 3rd through 6th of November, 1853, and recorded the following in a letter to his mother:

> 'I stopped at the Travellers Bungalow, and after breakfast not having any letters to deliver here, I drove to Mr. Hall's (the son of a prominent lawyer in Troy, who, after graduating at Harvard University came to Calcutta for his health and was shipwrecked at the mouth of the Hoogly and lost everything, while waiting for remittances from home, and having a most extraordinary talent for languages he learned Hindoo [Hindi] and Persian, then concluded to remain and study Sanscrit). His progress was so rapid in that he was persuaded to remain and take a Professor's chair in the new college then being established at Benares, and now is professor of Sanscrit in the college here, with a very widely extended reputation. He has only been in the country seven years, and with a knowledge of five languages of Europe, and the classics to commence with, he has now what he calls a partial knowledge of 22 languages; but he means by partial, not a critical, but what ordinary persons would call a thorough knowledge. I am told he is the best Sanscrit scholar in India, and perhaps in the world, as they have so much better opportunities of perfecting themselves here than in Europe. The head of the college** is so jealous of H—'s growing reputation for Sanscrit, and of his superior knowledge of that language, that he don't know whether to surrender to H— or not. H— is now in receipt of $ 2,500 per annum and in a few weeks is to have a new appointment that will double it, with a retiring allowance after eleven years more of service of $ 2,000 per annum—a nice country to work for.
>
> Arriving at his [Hall's] house I sent in my card, and found him a thorough American in appearance save the moustache, which, as I wear one myself, I'll say nothing about. He received me in a most friendly manner, and insisted upon my removing to his bungalow, and with that drove me to the dak bungalow and ordered my things to his house; where I found him luxuriating in bachelor style, with books, pipes, cats, and dogs; the first laid where convenience had suited, and the latter

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* Much of the data provided herein were found in the *History of Rensselaer County, New York*, authored by Nathaniel Bartlett Sylvester, published in 1880, pp. 195-96.

** At that time Dr J. R. Ballantyne was the Principal of the College.

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wandering about as they chose. In fact everything in what we bachelors term *order*, and you ladies, by some singular caprice, designate as disorder but only a slight misnomer.

After a long and amusing conversation about Benares, and his occupations of collecting literature for government, compiling other facts for his publication, carrying on controversies with Sanscrit scholars at Oxford and Cambridge, editing works, scribbling for newspapers and pamphlets and sometimes regularly editing the paper, studying languages of all sorts and kinds, in fact a dabble in everything, a thorough American turn of mind, we then drove out.'

While Ireland's fascinating memoir corroborates most of the information previously mentioned and furnishes some additional insights as to his admiration for Hall, it also contains some verifiable inaccuracies and questionable claims.

We are told, for example, that Hall came to India for health reasons, which would appear to be quite unusual and an entirely different explanation from that offered at the outset. Ireland also reports that Hall received his appointment to the newly established Benares Sanskrit College. Since the College was established as early as 1791, Ireland may have been mistakenly referring to the Anglo-Sanskrit Department, which we know was introduced a little before Hall's arrival in Varanasi. Moreover, Hall's first appointment was to the position of tutor and not professor as reported by Ireland.

The account also mentions that in a few weeks of their meeting, Hall was to be awarded a new appointment by which he would draw a very lucrative salary. This appointment possibly refers to his promotion to a full professorship at the same College.

Ireland further writes that Hall had a thorough knowledge of twenty-two languages, including five European and three others, namely Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian, but remains silent on which others Hall had mastered. Hall's knowledge of so many languages has also not been supported by any other biographical notes on him and it would appear quite likely that Ireland's information in this regard suffered from an admiring exaggeration.

One would also reasonably hesitate to accept Hall as the best Sanskrit scholar in the world during the early 1850s, as suggested by Ireland, especially if we remember that Hall, in spite of his 'most extraordinary talent for languages', studied Sanskrit—an enormously vast and abstract language—for only the few short years from his arrival in India to his

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meeting Ireland, while concurrently engaged in the study of at least four other oriental languages including Bengali. Hall's profound scholarship is, however, beyond doubt, as substantiated by his appointment to a professorship at the Benares Sanskrit College, and later, as Professor of Sanskrit, Hindusthani and Indian Jurisprudence at King's College, London, from 1862 to 1869, and also his appointment as Librarian of the India Office, London, during the same time.

In his monograph on Varanasi, Reverend Sherring observed in 1868 that Hall's 'erudition and researches have placed him in the front rank of living Sanskrit scholars'. Sherring also requested Hall to write the Introduction to this book, which is also a fine testimony to Hall's vast learning. But his highest and most authoritative compliment came from Professor F. Max Müller, the great Indologist, who assessed Hall as 'a scholar of the most extensive acquaintance with Sanskrit Literature.'* He was a prodigious writer, having produced volumes of original, edited and translated material in different languages, touching on various subjects with a special emphasis on Indology.

Hall passed away in Marlesford, England, in January 1901 where he was cremated and his relics were returned to Troy to be interred at the Oakwood Cemetery in February of the same year.

N. B. Sylvester, author of the *History of Rensselaer County, New York*, published in 1880, included in this work biographical notes on Fitzedward Hall, who was still very much alive at the time. There he made the following significant observations regarding Hall's unique personality and the reasons for his relative obscurity among contemporary English speaking nations:

> 'Mr. Hall holds himself aloof from all literary societies, and has from the first persistently avoided all entanglement with cliques and coteries. Indeed, of his own choice, his acquaintance with men of letters is, and has always been, extremely limited. These circumstances, coupled with the unfamiliar character of his pursuits, go some way, without a doubt, towards accounting for the slight recognition which, considering the abundant and multifarious fruits of his pen, he has received in England and America, where he is less known than at Paris, Berlin, Leipsic, St. Petersburg, and Rome. Satisfied with nothing short of real excellence in scholarship, uncompromising, and careless of popularity, he is marked as a critic by his severe economy of commendation, and he has frequently assailed current judgement with a vigor corresponding to the strength of his argued convictions....'

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* *History of Rensselaer County*, pp. 195-96.

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COLLECTION OF MANUSCRIPTS

The name Varanasi became synonymous with the collecting of Sanskrit manuscripts by many Europeans, either personally or through an agent. Sir Roberts Chambers collected Sanskrit works from this City, employing Samuel Davis to procure them through Jonathan Duncan, the Resident.[240] Thus, a considerable number of Sanskrit manuscripts collected by European scholars from Varanasi have since been found in public libraries or private collections in Europe.[241] It is interesting to note in this connection that a Burmese party came to the City in 1841 and procured many Sanskrit manuscripts and the particulars of eight pandits (names not known) and left Varanasi on November 18, of the same year.[242]

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE WESTERN SANSKRIT SCHOLARS

It would be evident from the above study that efforts in the field of Sanskrit study undertaken by these Western scholars comprised the following: new compositions, translations of works from Sanskrit into European languages and vice versa, and the editing and collecting of manuscripts. Among these, the translation of Sanskrit works into European languages received the greatest attention.

Though attempts were made by these scholars to produce Sanskrit works in the fields of biography, history, Christianity, philosophy, and science, practically speaking, most were translations and published as textbooks primarily intended for the use of students. Hardly any creative writing in the branches of language, literature, or philosophy by these scholars is found.

What prompted them to undertake such works is a relevant question. First, there was the administrative exigency. Secondly, there was an academic necessity, a perceived need to impart a Western education at the Benares Sanskrit College in particular, and to students at large. Thirdly, there was the evident missionary motive of engendering interest in Christianity among students by highlighting the lives and teachings of Jesus Christ and his direct disciples. The fourth and most important of all these objectives was pure scholastic pursuit.

While these first two purposes were partly achieved and the third failed in its prime objective, scholastic pursuit went a long way in broadening the horizon of knowledge and in bringing East and West closer and thereby further opening avenues of mutual impact, which had begun with the advent of the Europeans in India.

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SANSKRIT LEARNING : AN ASSESSMENT

A comprehensive picture of Sanskrit learning in the City during the period under review may only be formed if the culture of Sanskrit in private and public seminaries* and by individuals are all taken into consideration. It would then be evident that it was during this period that the cultivation of Sanskrit learning reached its zenith in Varanasi, at least horizontally, if not vertically. Again, for the first time in the history of the City, new dimensions were added to the study of Sanskrit, such as instruction through a public seminary by the Europeans; a change in the methodology of imparting Sanskrit learning only by rote being supplemented by both rote and writing, the inclusion of Western learning in the curriculum of Sanskrit; and finally, methodical preservation and publication of Sanskrit manuscripts.

Such developments took place in consequence of the British rule, and the bringing in of new ideas and new institutions from the West. But the early British policy of patronizing Oriental learning did not continue long, and finally, on account of new Government policies, the official emphasis shifted from that of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian studies to English. This change of emphasis in the field of education, along with other factors such as transformation of society from mediaeval to modern and the consequent changes in popular attitude towards traditional learning and, above all, greater employment opportunities for English educated students than for those educated in classical studies, all adversely affected Sanskrit learning in both private and public seminaries of Varanasi. Although during this period Sanskrit culture was quite extensive in the City, it was now that the seeds of decadence were also planted. Consequently, within a few decades from the middle of the nineteenth century, the number of seminaries and scholars devoted to Sanskrit studies and the production of Sanskrit works began declining.

THE ARABIC, PERSIAN AND URDU LEARNING

While writing the history of Arabic literature in modern India, M. W. Mirza remarked that 'Arabic as the original language of the *Quran* and the Islamic sciences continued to attract the attention of the Indian Muslims during the nineteenth century and was widely studied throughout the country. The main purpose, however, of acquiring a

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* For details of such seminaries, see Chapter XIII.

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respectable knowledge of this language was to get acquainted with the religious texts rather than to cultivate a real taste for literature, and hence several important branches of Arabic literature, especially belles letters and poetry, were neglected.'[243]

Unlike Arabic studies, Persian literature, being mainly secular, provided little religious or emotional appeal for Indian Muslims and lost its former popularity during this period.[244] This was partly due to the secession of the trans-border areas of Kabul and Kandahar from the Mughal Empire resulting in a lack of Persian-speaking populations in India. Again, the ebb of Persian was partly due to the incursion of Urdu, which gradually replaced it as the lingua franca of the educated class and of literary composition. Finally, after the advent of the British, Persian was replaced by English as the official language of the British Government of India in 1834.[245] Though an elementary knowledge of Persian continued to be a part of the general education Muslims received throughout most of the nineteenth century, a real passion for the mastery of Persian language and literature, let alone for producing original works in the language, had begun to wane.[246]

Urdu made slow but steady progress, largely influenced by Persian as late as the third quarter of the nineteenth century, until the Aligarh movement led by Sir Sayed Ahmed.[247] It is in this background that the culture of Arabic, Persian, and Urdu in Varanasi during this period should be studied.

Though the City had a large Muslim population, the majority were otherwise engaged and had insufficient time and interest, or lacked an adequate background to undertake scholastic pursuits. Nevertheless, thanks to some learned people and a few litterateurs among the Muslims, Varanasi has also occupied a place, however insignificant in comparison with Jaunpur, Lucknow and Delhi, in the history of cultivation of Arabic, Persian, and Urdu learning in nineteenth century India.

According to information from Walter Hamilton,[248] there were thirty eminent instructors of Mohammedan Law in Varanasi in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, but he gave no names.

The following are the Maulavis of Varanasi who were proficient in Muslim theology and who also certified Warren Hastings on the occasion of his impeachment at British Parliament in 1788.

Maulavi Syed Badrul Din Ahmed
Maulavi Siraj ul Haque

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Maulavi Golam Hossein (Fayque?) Ali
Maulavi Abdul Hadi
Maulavi Salamat Ali
Maulavi Fakhruddin Muhammad
Maulavi Zafar Ali
Maulavi Najeebullah
Maulavi Wasil Ali
Maulavi Ahmadullah
Maulavi Muhammad Aslam[249]

A brief account of some of the Muslim scholars (Alim) of Varanasi now follows :

Ali Ibrahim Khan : An important figure in the field of administration of modern Varanasi as the first and an efficient Magistrate of the City under the British, Ali Ibrahim showed excellence also in the field of literature. He was a prolific writer and one wonders how, in spite of his extremely time-consuming duties with administration, he could produce such a vast corpus of literary material. Some of his works, which include varied subjects like literary history, political history, biography, comments on Hindu law, a collection of Islamic laws, poems and epistles, have also been highly rated by critics.

The following are short descriptions of some of Ali Ibrahim's works :[250]

Gulzar-i-Ibrahim : Biographies (*tazkira*) of and selections from the compositions of 325 Urdu poets. It was completed in 1784 (1198 Hijri);

Khulasatul Kalam : Biographies of 58 Persian *masnavi* writers, i.e., narative composers. It was written between 1186 and 1198 Hijri;

Suhuf-i-Ibrahim : This work, which is an exhaustive study of Persian poetry beginning with its origins in 940-941 AD and closing with current poets of Ali Ibrahim's day, is said to be the most voluminous *tazkira* ever written in Persian;

Tarikh (*Waqai*)*-i-Marhatta* : This is a contemporary history of the Maharashtrians;

Sawaneh Haider Ali : Also a historical work dealing with the life and times of Haider Ali, the celebrated ruler of Mysore;

Sawaneh Raja Chait Singh : This historical work deals with the life and times of the Raja of Varanasi;

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Fatawa-i-Ibrahim Khan : Holding a responsible position in the administration of justice, Ibrahim Ali collected *fatwas* (juristic verdicts) on Muslim Personal Law from various authentic sources and compiled them into this volume. Consequently, it has turned to be a monumental work in the field of Islamic Jurisprudence;

Poems : Ibrahim also composed poems in both Persian and Urdu and his poetical title was *Khalil*;

Khutoot-e-Ali Ibrahim (unpublished letters) : These letters, written in elegant Persian, throw light on various subjects of importance, including the administration of law and justice in Varanasi and Ibrahim's relationships with his many celebrated contemporaries, both Muslim and Hindu, near and far.

Abdul Qadir : Bishop Heber mentioned the name of one Abdul Khadeer (Qadir?) as a learned Muslim in his travel-account, but he did not give any details about him. Most possibly, this learned Muslim is identical with Abdul Qadir Khan, Quazi-ul-Quzzat, son of Wasil Ali Khan, the author of *Hashmat-i-Kashmir*, a history of Kashmir, with brief notes on Tibet, Badakshan, the hilly country between the Upper Oxus and Indus. This book, which was completed in Varanasi in 1830 and was dedicated to W. A. Brooke, the British Agent, gives an account of the circumstances leading the author to undertake the present work.[251]

Shaikh Ali Hazi(n) : A saint, as well as a great poet, having migrated to Varanasi from Persia around 1750, he was loved and respected by both Muslims and Hindus.[252]

Maulavi Abdul Haque Banarasi : The son of Maulavi Fazlullah and a great scholar (*mashur alim*) of Arabic and Persian.[253] He was born in 1206 Hijri (1791 AD).

Abdul Haque : He taught Arabic, Persian, and theology. Among his students were Maulavi Jalaluddin and his three sons, Maulavi Hamiduddin Ahmed, Sayid Sayeeduddin Ahmed, and Sayid Majiduddin Ahmed. He produced numerous works, one being the famous *Addarul Farid Filmon un At'taqlid*.[254]

Maulavi Hamid-ud-din Ahmed : The son of Maulavi Jalaluddin, was born in 1250 Hijri (1839 AD) and passed away in 1308 Hijri (1890). He was a scholar and also a Hakim, that is, a physician who practises according to the *hikmat* (Unani) system of medicine.[255]

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Sayed Sayeed-ud-din Ahmed : Another son of Jalaluddin, passed away in 1293 Hijri (1876). He wrote *Loghat-e-Quran*, Dictionary of Quran[256], and *Minhajul Firdous*, the path of Heaven.[257]

Sayed Majid-ud-din : The third son of Jalaluddin, born in Hijri 1256 (1840), died at the age of thirty-three in Hijri 1298 (1920).[258] He was a scholar of Arabic and Persian from whom students from distant places would take lessons.

Maulavi Abdul Ali (1204-1247 Hijri, 1789-1831 AD)[259] : A son of Haji Karimullah, a good scholar, was also a teacher in the Jaynarayan School of Varanasi. His son was Maulavi Jalal-ud-din.

Maulavi Hadi Ali (1214-1286 Hijri, 1799-1869 AD) : A scholar and a writer, he left Varanasi for Lucknow at the invitation of Nawab Haidar Ali Khan and Qadir Ali Khan.[260]

Maulavi Jalal-ud-din Ahmed (1221-1270 Hijri, 1806-1853 AD) : The son of Maulavi Abdul Ali and student of Abdul Haque. He had three sons who were also scholars.[261] He wrote the following works :

Fatuh Hatus Sawab Fi Qarate Fatehatul Kitab (in Persian) or the Correct Style of Reading the Holy Quran according to the School of *Hejaz* and *Qaherah*. This work argues that *doa* should be made after *namaz*;
Zub-Datul Albal (in Urdu), on *doa*;
Zub-Datul Qawanin (in Urdu), on grammar;
Imbesat Ebartul Qafya (in Urdu), on grammar.

Maulavi Mahammad Abdus Subhan : A scholar and a Sufi, he wrote *Maqalat Subhania Malfuzat* or Thesis on Holy God and Dewan, a collection of poems.

Maulana Rahamatulla Khan : From Delhi, he settled in Varanasi and started teaching. A Sunni Muslim, he, according to one version, captured the Jnan Vapi Mosque for the Sunnis from the hands of the Shiahs and improved its management. He reintroduced *namaz* in this mosque, which had been stopped for some time.[262]

Maulana Mahammad Sayeed : A Hindu *Kshatri* born in Punjab, he later was converted to Islam. He went to Delhi where he received his education from Maulana Sayeed Nazir Hussein. Finally, he came to Varanasi[263] and settled. He took up the profession of teaching and also had students from Bengal.

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Zakir Banarasi (1802-1872) : A poet, and though he did not know Arabic, he was well versed in Persian and Urdu and composed poems. He was a Sunni Muslim though his wife was a Shiah. He produced a collection of poems, or *Dewani*. Two *shers*[269] are quoted below from his works :

Ishq me sar bhi gar juda hoga
Naframosh yeh maza hoga
One cannot forget the taste of love even if the head is separated from the body;
Mil rahega hamen zamane men
Yeh hamare naseeb ka hoga
What is fixed by our fate will come to us in this life.

Mushafi : A disciple of Zakir Banarasi.[265]

Mirza Faiz : Another disciple of Zakir Banarasi. His name is still familiar in Varanasi, and it is held that most of the modern poets of this place have been influenced by the style of Mirza Faiz.[266]

Haidar Baksh Haidari : A scholar of Urdu. He was brought up in Varanasi and later joined the Fort William College of Calcutta. He wrote a number of books in Urdu.[267]

Mirza Ghalib : The most celebrated poet of Urdu and Persian of Delhi. He visited Varanasi in 1827, and charmed by its uniqueness, composed beautiful couplets on Varanasi.* [268]

HINDUS AND PERSIAN LEARNING

The culture of Persian language and literature was not confined to Muslims alone. Though on a limited scale, Hindus also showed interest in the study of Persian. The Persian chair at the Benares Sanskrit College was occupied by a Hindu and the first person to hold that post was one Thakurdas.[269] Another Hindu, Munshi Kashinath, was regarded as the best Persian scholar of Varanasi. He succeeded Thakurdas in the said post after the latter had passed away, perhaps in 1818.[270] In the old records of the Jaynarayan School, we also find the mention of a Hindu Assistant to a Persian teacher in 1818.[271] There were also a number of Hindu boys studying Persian at this school in the same year,[272] and the Persian courses must have continued afterwards. Shital Singh, *munshi* to the Maharaja of

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* Ghalib's couplet on Varanasi has been quoted in Chapter I.

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Varanasi, and Demetrius Galanos, the Greek scholar already referred to, were also great nineteenth-century scholars of Persian.[273] There are even instances of pandits knowing Persian. On the occasion of his first visit to the College on November 17, 1791, Jonathan Duncan received a solemn address from Anand Gir Gossain, Professor of Puranas, who first delivered it in the original Sanskrit metre then followed with an elegant poetical version in Persian.[274]

Anand Gyan, or Ananda Giri, a Brahmin from Mathura, referred to above, was one of the pandits recruited by Jonathan Duncan for translating Sanskrit texts into Persian. He translated the *Ramayana* into Persian, which was translated into English in 1804 by Charles Boddam, the Judge and Magistrate of Saran, a neighbouring district of Varanasi.[275] He also translated the *Kashi Khandam* into Persian under the title *Tarjuma-i-Kashi Khand*. Most probably, this work was dedicated to Jonathan Duncan.*

Mathuranath, a Brahmin of Malwa living in the City, wrote *Riyaz-ul-Mazahib* (Fields of Sects) into Persian at the request of Robert Thomas John Glynn, the Registrar of the City Court and Assistant to the Magistrate in 1810.[276] Shital Singh, already referred to, also wrote *Silsila-i-Jogiyan* (The Chain of the Yogins) into Persian. These two later treatises formed the main source of Horace Hayman Wilson's celebrated work on the religious sects of the Hindus.[277]

Some British officials posted in Varanasi, such as W. A. Brooke, James Prinsep, and Macleod, learnt both Persian and Hindusthani well, though they apparently never employed this knowledge in producing any works.

HINDI

The medium of conversation in the City for day-to-day transactions was Hindi, which was written in the Bhojpuri dialect. The local Hindus spoke Hindi interspered with Arabic and Persian words and wrote it in Devanagari script. But so far as Hindi literature is concerned, it was written in *Brajabhaka* in the earlier days and most of the compositions were in verse.

The authors of a comprehensive history of Hindi literature divided the periods of growth and development of Hindi literature into the following

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* A copy of this book is preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.

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eight divisions :[279] (1) The Dawn of Hindi (650 to 1286); (2) The Second Stage (1286 to 1387); (3) Early Medieval Hindi (1387 to 1503); (4) Advanced Medieval Hindi (1503 to 1623); (5) Early Adorned Hindi (1623 to 1733); (6) Advanced Adorned Hindi (1733 to 1832); (7) The Transition (1832 to 1868); and (8) Modern Hindi (from 1868 onwards). Our study coincides with the Advanced Adorned Hindi and the Transition periods. Since practically nothing can be said regarding the period of Advanced Adorned Hindi, which is an improvement upon an older style, we shall concentrate on the Transition period.

The circumstances which led to the ushering in of this Transition period in Hindi literature during this part of the nineteenth century began with regular and methodical Hindi culture being initiated in newly founded educational institutions. English education disposed the minds of the young to accept new ideas favourably. Those with a modern education had a fair knowledge of literature and the social sciences, Western value systems, and in some cases, physical and pure sciences and subjects like medicine and engineering that had developed in Europe. Through British agency, connections were established with the rest of India and the world outside via a network of communications, the publication of books, journals, and newspapers, etc. The introduction of the printing press facilitated the easy and wide dissemination of knowledge. Finally, experiments in modern Bengali language and literature in Bengal left a 'pan-Indian' impact on the language and literature of other provinces.

All these presumably generated a tremendous impulse among the motivated intelligentsia of Varanasi to impart new and useful knowledge to the people, to foster an awareness of the motherland and lands outside, and to make literature the common medium for expressing feelings and aspirations. For these reasons it must have been felt that the vernacular of Hindi be vigorously developed and enriched in such a way that it could be a proper medium to suit these noble purposes. These are the circumstances that led to new experiments in Hindi literature. Varanasi virtually became the chief centre of such experiments and intellectuals and humanists like Raja Shivaprasad became the pioneers of the experiments.

Dr J. R. Ballantyne, the celebrated Principal of the the Sanskrit College also showed great interest in the development of Hindi. He took active steps to popularize it in that institution[280] and to standardize it by persuading his pupils to translate Sanskrit works into Hindi as early as in 1846.

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Consequently, in this period of Hindi Transition, a prose literature evolved in place of verse, and as regards the language, Brajabhaka was gradually replaced by Urdu and Sanskrit-mixed Hindi, and still later by *Khaḍiboli* Hindi. Side by side with the writing of works in a new style, the publication of magazines and journals also started in Varanasi during this time. Hindi works of old style did not altogether cease, but also continued after that period. Nevertheless, the experiments made in the period of Transition paved the way for the effulgent dawn of the period of Modern Hindi.

Now let us catalogue the authors of Hindi literature belonging to Varanasi during our period of review with necessary details, including the titles of the works composed by them.[281]

Raja Chet Singh : This valiant Raja of Varanasi was also a poet and his works include, *Lakshminarayan Vinod*, written in 1783, after his leaving the City.[282]

Gokulnath Vandijan : The son of Vandijan Raghunath, he was patronized by Maharaja Chet Singh. His works include *Chetchandrika* (on the dynasty of Raja Chet Singh)—also a book on *Alamkara* (Rhetorics), *Govinda Sukhavihar, Radhakrishna Vilas, Radhaji ka Nakhasikh, Nama Ratnamala Kosh, Sitaram Gunarnav, Amar Kosh Bhasha,* and *Kavimukha mandan.*

Hindi translations of the *Mahabharatam* and *Harivamsham* were initiated by Gokulnath along with his son Gopinath and disciple Manidev by order of Raja Uditnarain. This monumental project was completed and published in late 1884. This work left a considerable impact on Hindi literature.

Agranarayan and Vaishnavadas : They wrote a commentary on the commentary of *Bhaktamal.*

Mukundalal Banarasi : Born in 1803 V.S., he composed poems around 1830 V.S.[283]

Bhikaridas Kayastha : The period of his compositions was possibly between 1734 and 1790.[284] His works include *Rasasar, Chhandarnav*, and *Shringar Nirnay.*

Maniar Singh :[285] The nephew of Raja Balwant Singh, born in 1800 V.S., composed the following works in a Sanskrit-mixed Brajabhaka[286] : *Saundaryalahari, Hanuman Chhabbishi, Bhashamahimna, Bhavartha-chandrika*, and *Sundara Kanda.*

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Lal Kavi Banarasi : The Court-Poet of Raja Chet Singh, his writing dates around 1832 V.S.[287] His works include *Anandaras, Lalachandrika*, a commentary on *Bihari Satsai*[288], and *Rasamel*. In addition, he composed poems on the Raja of Kashi.[289]

Hariprasad : Patronized by Raja Chet Singh, his work appeared around 1832 V.S.[290] He wrote *Sanskrita Saptashati*.

Mathuranath Malaviya : The period of his compositions was between 1835 V.S. and 1846 V.S.[291] His work includes *Virahabattishi*, *Chausar Chakra*, *Viveka Panchamrita, Churhamani Shakun*, and *Patanjali Bhasha*, all in verse, and *Sutrarthapatanjali Bhasha* in prose.

Bhavani Sahay : A *kayastha*, his writing appeared around 1839 and he composed *Baitalpachchishi*.

Radhikanath Banerjee : A Bengalee Brahmin of Varanasi, he was a prose writer around 1847[292] and his works include *Suhasini* and *Swarnabai*.

Ganesha : Son of the poet Gulab and grandson of the poet Salu or Lal, he was a Court-Pandit of Raja Uditnarain of Varanasi, and his compositions date around 1847 V.S.[293] His works include: *Valmiki Ramayana*, *Shlokartha Prakash*, *Rituvarnan*, *Hanumanpachchishi*, and *Kayastha*.

Ramsahay : Also a Court-Pandit to Raja Uditnarain,[294] his works include *Ramsahay Shatika*, *Banibhushan*, and *Vrittatarangini*, composed in 1816.

Brahmadatta Brahman : He was patronized by Dipnarain Singh, the younger brother of Raja Uditnarain. His compositions, appeared between 1860 V.S. and 1865 V.S.,[295] include *Vidvatvilas* and *Dipaprakash*; the later work, printed in 1865 V.S., is on *Alamkara*.

Ratan Kumari Devi : The grand-mother of Raja Shivaprasad, she was perhaps the only female author of Hindi during this period. She wrote *Premaratna*.

Maharaja Sundar Singh : He composed between 1869 V.S. and 1870 V.S. and his works include *Panchadhyayi*, *Gauribai ki Mahima*, and *Husnachaman*.

Janakiprasad : A poet and a great scholar, his period of composition was around 1872 V.S.[296] *Ramprakashika* or *Ramachandrika Tika* was a

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scholastic work, and his other works include *Mukti Ramayana* and *Rambhakti Prakashika.*

Jayagopal : A son of Radhakrishna, he lived in the Daranagar area and was a disciple of Sant Ramgulam. His major work, dated around 1874 V.S.,[297] is *Tulasi Shabdarthaprakash* which is a lexicon in three parts—(i) *Vastusankhya Varnan*; (ii) *Shabdarthanirnay*; and (iii) *Guhyasthalon ke Arthon ka Varnan.*

Yadunath Shukla : A son of Mathuranath Shukla, his works are dated around1857 V.S.[298] and include *Panchanga Darshan*, *Vrihajjatak tatha Rajamuk Prashna* and *Samudrik.*

Sundardas : His works, mainly composed in *doha* and *choupai* and written between 1857 V.S. and 1869 V.S.[299], include *Shrisundarshyamvilas*, *Vinaysar*, and *Sundarshatashringar.*

Brajalal Bhatta : Son of Man Kavi and patronized by the Varanasi Raja in 1850 V.S., his compositions date around 1857 V.S. He wrote *Chhandaratnakar*, (1881 V.S.), *Uditakirtiprakash* (the biography of Raja Uditnarain) and *Hanumanta Balacharitra* (1876 V.S.).

Baba Dinadayal Giri : A monk as well as a renowned poet of both Hindi and Sanskrit, he used to live near Vinayak Dev Mahalla on the west side of the City. His compositions were produced between 1888 and 1912 and he authored a number of works[300] including : *Anuragabag*—a poem of high standard based on the biography of Sri Krishna, *Anyoktikalpadruma, Vishvanathanavaratna, Chakorapanchak, Drishtantatarangini, Kashipancharatna, Vairagyadinesh, Dipakapanchak, Antarlapika,* and *Bag-O-Bahar.*[301]

Balaban Sing (alias Kaviraj) : The son of Raja Chet Singh, he wrote quality poetry including *Chitrachandrika* in 1889 V.S.[302]

Paragdas Brahman : Patronized by the Varanasi Raja, he composed *Amarkosh Bhasha* and *Bhojanvilas* between 1877 V.S. and 1885 V.S.[303]

Diragh Kavi Brahman : A poet around 1879 V.S.,[304] his works include *Drishtantatarangini*, and *Vamshivarnan.*

Giridharji : The mahant of the celebrated Gopal Temple of Varanasi. Around 1887 V.S.[305] he wrote *Mukundaji ki Varta* and *Mukundaji ki Vani.*

Jayanarayan Ghoshal : The builder of the Gurudhama Temple and

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also the founder of the Jaynarayan School, rendered *Kashi Khandam* into Hindi with the help of other scholars.[306]

Shankara Kavi : Born in c. 1869 V.S., the son of poet Dhaniram, his elder brother was the poet Sevakram. He was patronized by Baboo Ramprasanna Singh, an aristocrat of the City. His compositions date around 1895 V.S. Though some of his poems could be traced, we have found no work written by him.[307]

Kashthajihva Swami (alias Deva Kavi) : A monk and great scholar of Sanskrit and Hindi, he was a versatile genius, patronized by Raja Ishwarinarain.[308] His work appears around 1897 V.S.[309] and the main theme of his writing is devotion to God. The verses he composed are very sweet and popular.[310] His works include *Vinayamrita, Ramlagan Ramayan Paricharya, Vairagyapradip*, and *Padavali Satkanda.*

Dhaniram : Patronized by Babu Deoki Nandan, an aristocrat of the City, his compositions appear around 1810 V.S.[311] He wrote *Ramjnanoday* and *Bhashaprakash*, which were translated into Hindi from Sanskrit; and he also wrote commentaries on the *Ramayana* of Jankiprasad and on the *Ramachandrika* of Keshav.

Gopalchandra (alias Giridhar Das) : The father of Babu Harishchandra and one of the aristocrats of the City, he wrote about forty works, the period of his composition being c. 1900 V.S.[312] A poet of high order he was born in 1832 AD and passed away at the young age of only twenty-seven. He took his pen-name from his preceptor Giridharji, who belonged to the Vallabhacharya sect.[313] Among his works are *Dashavatar, Bharatibhushan, Barahamas, Shat Ritu, Jarasandha Vadh*, his most distinguished work, and *Nahush Natak*, a drama.[314]

Sevak : Born in 1872 V.S., he passed away in 1938 V.S. at the age of sixty-six. He was patronized by Harishankar, the grandson of Janakinandan.[315] Some of his descendants became famous poets as well. He wrote *Vagvilas, Pipaprakash*, and *Barabai Nakhashikh.*

Sardar : Born to Kavi Harijan, this illustrious poet was patronized by Raja Ishwarinarain. His period of work was between 1902 V.S. and 1940 V.S. He wrote a number of pieces in prose and verse. Both his language and ideas were highly appreciated. His prose includes *Kashiraj Prakashika*, a commentary on *Kavipriya*,[316] *Sukhavilasika*, a commentary on *Rasikapriya*[317], *Sur ke Drishtakut*, and a commentary on *Bihari Satsai.*

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The following were written in verse :[318] *Sahityasarasi*, *Vyangavilas*, *Shat Dhatu*, *Hanumatbhushan*, *Tulasibhushan*, *Manasabhushan*, *Shringarasamgraha*, *Ramaran Ratnakar*, *Ramaras Jantra*, *Sahitya Sudhakar*, and *Ramalilaprakash*.

Raja Shivaprasad Sitar-e-Hind* : Born to a Jaina family in 1880 V.S., he passed away in 1952 V.S. He was in favour of the dissemination of knowledge through the Hindi medium and with this end in view he composed a good number of works in prose, mainly on secular themes.[319] But his Hindi was primarily Urdu oriented. His works include : *Varnamala*, *Balabodh*, *Vidyankur*, *Vamamanoranjan*, *Hindi Vyakaran*, *Bhugol Hastamalak*, *Chhota Hastamalak Bhugol*, *Itihas Timirnashak*, *Gutka*, *Manavadharmasar*, *Sikkhon ka Uday aur Ast*, *Swayambodh Urdu*, *Angrezi Aksharon ke Sikhne ka Upay*, *Bachhon ka Inam*, *Raja Bhoj ka Sapna*, and *Virasingh ka Vrittanta*.

The very titles of these works suggest his eagerness and a laborious effort in imparting Ethics, History, Urdu and English to students of both sexes. Though most of his works were either compilations or simply translations, he did compose a few original works.

Lallu Lal : A student of the Benares Sanskrit College, he wrote *Premsagar*, which was translated from Sanskrit by order of Dr J. R. Ballantyne, Principal of the College, and the preceptor of the author. It was a standard work on Hindi grammar and orthography.[320]

Ganesh Prasad : He was patronized by the local Raja. The date of his composition was around 1896 V.S.[321] He wrote *Hanumanpachchishi*.

Gajaraj : His period was around 1846 V.S.[322] and he wrote *Suvrittahar* and *Ramayana*.

Vanshidhar Bhatt : Born in 1870 V.S., his compositions date around 1901 V.S.[323] He wrote *Vidur Prajagar* and *Mitra Manohar*.

Vanswarup : Born in 1874 V.S., his period was around 1901 V.S. producing a few poems.[324]

Sahabdin Sadhu : He wrote *Sandehabodh* around 1907 V.S.[325]

Aughaḍ : Patronized by Raja Ishwarinarain, he wrote *Tarangavilas* around 1910 V.S.[326]

Kripalu Datta : The father of Pandit Sudhakar Dwivedi, a great scholar

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* For further details on Raja Shivaprasad, see Chapter XVIII.

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of Sanskrit. Though he was a good poet, the titles of his works have not been found. The period of his compositions was around 1915 V.S.[327]

Raghunandan Kayastha : Born in 1897 V.S., he wrote *Chitragupteshwar Puran* around 1925 V.S.

Nehemiah Goreh (formerly Pandit Nilkantah Shastri Goreh): This Brahmin pandit of Varanasi was converted to Christianity in 1848. He wrote *Shaḍdarshana Darpan* to refute Hindu philosophical systems from a Christian standpoint.[328]

The Hindi magazines and journals published in the City during the period of study have been dealt with in Chapter XIV. There we shall see that among the subscribers to the Hindi Magazines, there were also quite a few Europeans.

BENGALI AND OTHER VERNACULARS

We have noted in Chapter IV on population that peoples from many different provinces migrated to Varanasi bringing with them their respective vernaculars including Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Bengali, etc. Unfortunately, data regarding the culture of these languages during this period are almost nil. Despite sizeable settlements of people speaking these languages in the City, it may so happen that other than neighbourhood conversation, there was not much local culture of those languages at this time with the exception of Bengali.*

ENGLISH

In Varanasi, the oldest school in the whole of U. P. was established in 1814 to disseminate an English education to local students. Then a Government English school was started in 1830, an English section was attached to the the Sanskrit College during 1847-48, and English was imparted to local students through other Christian Missionary institutions. In spite of these developments English language and literature did not flourish as significantly in Varanasi as it had done in Calcutta. Consequently, there is no information that any citizen of Varanasi produced any literary works in English or in any other European language of the quality that Michael Madhusudan Dutta, Aru Dutta and Taru Dutta, and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya of Calcutta produced.[329]

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* We have dealt with the culture of Bengali language in Chapter XVI.

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However, examples of Varanasi scholars writing in English are not completely lacking. Pandit Bapudeva Shastri, Professor, the Sanskrit College, who had a fair knowledge of English, wrote articles on astronomy in English. The new elites of Varanasi with Western education background were well versed in English. Nehemiah Goreh of Varanasi, already referred to, wrote extensively in English in the form of both articles and monographs favouring Christianity over Hinduism. His writings, limited mainly to theology,[330] include *Proofs for the Divinity of Our Lord, Objections to Catholic Doctrine* (1868 A.D.), *Letter to the Brahmos from a Converted Brahmin of Banaras*, *Theism and Christianity*, *The Real Presence*, and *The Brahmos : Their Idea of Sin.*

LITERARY SOCIETIES

James Prinsep, Assay Master at Varanasi, who was also greatly interested in academic pursuits, presumably came into contact with the elite and scholars of the City. This possibly induced him to found a Literary Society in 1822, known as the Benares Literary Society. Obviously, the purpose of this Society was to promote the utilization of learning along modern lines. Papers written on Indian themes were said to have been read out in this Society and printed at a press also set up by Prinsep later on, but further details on the activities of the Society are not available.[331]

According to Rev. Sherring's testimony, there were several societies (one being Prinsep's Institute, already referred to) at one time in Varanasi but details of these, except Benares Institute, are unfortunately not known. Benares Institute, which was founded in the 1840s prospered and had comparatively a longer tenure than its counterparts. Sherring gave the following description of this literary society in 1868.

> 'One of these (societies), the most distinguished of all, called the Benares Institute, still flourishes. It numbers more than a hundred native members, of whom some are princes and nobles of high rank, others are pandits and *maulavis*—men of great learning in Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian Literature—some are professors and teachers in colleges, others are magistrates and judges in the courts of law, while all are men of consideration and local influence. A few European residents of the station are also connected with the Institute.
>
> At the meetings which are held, lectures and essays are delivered on subjects of general interest and importance; and the discussions which are carried on are often most earnest and exciting. Hindus of old school here contend with Hindus of new school—men of the past, determined to uphold the system to the last, with men of the present determined at least to modify them and to bring them to the test of rigid

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scrutiny.... The Institute has five constituent sections, each of which has a European president and one or more native secretaries. The sections are devoted to the following subjects : Education; Sociology or Social Progress; Philosophy and Literature; Science and Arts, with which is associated Medical and Sanitary Improvement (in Benares); and Jurisprudence. The Institute published a volume of Transactions in the year 1865.'[332]

A TRADITION CONTINUES

From the data presented in this chapter regarding the pursuit of learning and literary activities, it is evident that even through a period of momentous change, Varanasi zealously guarded and maintained the glorious traditions of classical learning inherited from preceding centuries.

Also a seat of Islamic studies and studies of emerging vernaculars, especially Hindi, Varanasi found herself a centre of learning in the diverging dimensions of a new age as well. The variety of subjects taught and explored through compositions in classical languages and vernaculars is enlightening, and, if critically studied, may reveal a wealth of fascinating data. These may, in turn, prove to be vital for the study of Varanasi's literary tradition in particular and of India in general.

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APPENDIX

NAMES OF SANSKRIT SCHOLARS OF LAST QUARTER OF 18th CENTURY

Anna Shastri
Amba Shankar
Ambaram Tiwary
Ajaram
Ambashankar Jani
Abhishankar Joshi
Ananta Ram Bhatt
Ambaram Vyas
Ambashankar
Anupnarayan Dev
Angiswar (Agnishwar?)
Atmaram Koti
Atmaram Puranic
Anandaram Sukul
Aratram Durlabhram
Anandram Vyas
Anandram Jani
Anandram Das
Anandram Bhatt
Adatram Pathak
Asharam Bhatt
Ausan Mishra
Ijjatram Jajatram Dube
Ishwarjee
Udayshankar Pandit
Udaykrishna (Tewari)
Umakanta Shastri
Uttamram Vyas
Udaykrishna Jani
Kishan Ballabh Tewari
Kishenjee Joshi
Kanhoji Dube
Keval Krishna Dikshit
Kamala Charan
Kashiram
Krishnadayal
Kashiram Shivshankar
Krishnadeo Dikshit
Kripashankar Dikshit
Kripa Krishan
Keval Krishna Dube
Kishen Bhatt
Kalyanjee Dikshit
Kalyanjee Pandit
Kandev
Kandeo Tewari
Kashinath
Kebal Ram Mishra
Kashinath Bhatt
Krishna Bhatt
Krishnananda Pathak
Karmanath Pathak
Khelaram Sharma
Gangaram Bhatt
Gangaram Jani Bhatt
Jnaneshwar Bhatt
Ganapatiji Dube
Gangaram (Barha)
Ganesh Bhatt
Gaurishankar Aurachand
Govindaram
Ganapat Joshi
Gopaljee Dikshit
Govindanath Dikshit
Govindaram Dikshit
Gopaldev Upadhyay
Gauriprasad Pandit
Govinda Bhatta
Ganapati Dev
Gopal Vyas
Ganeshram Panda
Ganpat Bhatt
Gangaram Mishra
Gangaram Bhatt
Gopal Krishna Matha
Chiranjib Dube
Chandreshwar
Chaturbhuj
Chatureshwar Bhatt
Chintaman Bhatt
Chaturbhuj Upadhyay
Jayram Bhatt
Jayakrishna
Jagannath Dharmadhikari
Jagatram
Jateshwar
Jadupat Joshi
Jagannath Bhatt Sukul
Jagannath Mishra
Jagannath Bhatt
Jivanram Dube
Jatashankar Dikshit
Janta Sharma
Jagannath Panth
Jayaram Joshi
Jaydev Dube
Jagajiwan
Jankinath
Jagannath
Jawan Dikshit
Jagannath Kewal
Jagannath Ray
Jayadev Sharma
Jagannath Sharma
Jugalmohan Sharma
Thakur Dikshit
Trikamjee Dube
Trilokchandra Ganguli
Dinanath
Dayadhar
Dayanath Vishnu
Dinadhar
Dayanath Karunakaran
Durgashankar
Deodatta Bhatt
Dadham Bhatt
Deoram Dube

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Durgacharan Sharma
Durlabhji Dikshit
Dundh Bhatt
Dundhraj Bhatt
Dato Joshi
Nandaram Panda
Narasinhajee Mishra
Nana Pauranik
Narayan Dev
Nitum Bhatt
Nana Bhatt
Narayan Bhatt
Narottam Bhatt
Nil Kanta Bhatt
Narayan Mishra
Premshankar
Purbadeb Vyas
Prahlad Bhatt
Purushottam Joshi
Prithviraj Pandey
Parashuram Dikshit
Purushottam Vyas
Vireshwar Shesh
Balam Bhatt Bharadwaj
Balakishen Harikatha
Balamukunda
Vyasdev Bhatt
Vinayak Bhatt Mouni
Virupat Joshi
Binatram Dube
Vidyadhar
Balamukunda
Shankaravallabh
Vishwanath Gopinath
Vishweshwar Tewari
Vidyadhar Biti
Vidyadhar Joshi
Vireshwar
Baijnath Tewari
Balakishen Dikshit
Veniram (Baḍa)
Babu Dikshit
Baijnath Bhatt
Vishnuram Dube
Vallabhjee Panda
Vijayram Vyas
Balam Bhatt Gairbi
Balamukunda Bhatt
Vallabhjee
Veniram Bhatt
Vishwanath Bhatt
Vinayak Vyas
Balajee
Vishnupath Nath
Vishweshwar Dube
Venidhar Dikshit
Venidhar Jani
Veninath Pandit
Vedeshwar Pandit
Benu Sharma
Brahman Shastri
Vidyanidhi Bhatt
Vishwambhar Pandit
Veniram Dasaputra
Vyasdev Pantha
Badu Pantha
Vedeshwar Dikshit
Vinayak Dikshit
Vishnuram
Vinayshankar Bhatt
Vaijnath Dube
Balajee Bhatt
Bhavdev Mishra
Bhairo Dube
Bhavani Kishen
Bhavani Shankar Thakur
Bhutaram Dharan
Bhairo Dikshit
Bhairochand Sharma
Bhairo Bhatt
Bhavani Sharma
Bhavanishankar Dikshit
Bhanushankar Dikshit
Bhutram Vachashpati
Bhavanicharan Sarkar
Bhavanishankar Sharma
Bhairavcharan Seth
Meghnath Dev
Mukundaram Shukul
Mulnath Rudrajee
Meghapat Joshi
Mohandas Maslijdar
Mukeshwar
Mata Gopal Krishna
Mataram Bhatt
Mansaram
Manas Dikshit
Motilal Tewari
Mahidhar Pandit
(Dharmadhikari)
Mayanath Panda
Mahadev Dev
Mahadev Panda
Mahadev Panth
Maniram Bhatt
Markandeshwar Shukla
Motiraj
Manuji Joshi
Mukunda Panth
Mukunda Dev
Murar Path
Mohanjee
Mayashankar Jani
Mathuranath Dube
Mayaram Vyas
Maniram Sadabarti
Manikchand Sharma
Yugalkishore Upadhyay
Yajneshwar Bhatt
Yajneshwar Shastri
Ramakrishna Tripathi
Ram Bhatt
Ram Mishra
Ratiram
Rewa Das
Rewa Jani
Rasiklal
Ramdatta Shrirangeshwar
Ramchand Vyas

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Ratanji Tewari
Radhakrishna Ojha
Raghunath Gopal
Rajaram
Rupram Vyas
Ramkishen Bhatt Kole
Ramchand Bhatt
Ramchandar Bhatt Kulthur
Rama Shastri
Ramananda Sharma
Rameshwar Bhatt
Ramchand Tara Pandit
Raghuraj Mishra
Rambhadra Pandit
Ramchandra Pandit
Ramakrishna Dikshit
Ranganath Bhatt
Ramsankar Vyas
Ramchand Panth Dev
Rajaram Bhatt
Ramchand Dev
Radhacharan Pandit
Ramprasad Gosain
Rajbhadra Pathak
Ramnath Dikshit
Ramram Siddhanta
Ramakrishna Sharma
Ramcharan Vidyavagisha
Ramprasad Bandyopadhyay
Ramsundar Ray
Ramcharan Chakravorty
Ramchandra Vidyalankar
Ramram Bakshi
Rudraram Sarkar
Ramshankar Bandyopadhyay
Ramakanta Vidyalankar
Ramnath Sharma
Ramram Sharma
Ramjoy Gangopadhyay
Ramdas Sharma
Ramram Siddhanta
Rammohan Bhattacharya
Rambhadra Nyayalankar
Raghunath Palit
Ramnarayan Shil
Ramsundar Sain
Rammohan Palit
Ramcharan Bandyopadhyay
Ramhari
Ramnidhi Das
Lakshmidhar Dikshit
Laladhar
Lachhman Vyas
Lakshmipat Joshi
Lachhman Pandit
Lachhman Dikshit
Lajjaram Vyas
Loknath Dev
Lakshman Vidyavagisha
Lakshminarayan Sharma
Shobhanath Sharma
Shambhunath Upadhyay
Shambhunath Dev
Seodurlabhjee
Seopuran Jivan
Seodatta Pathak
Seovikram
Seoshankar Dikshit
Seoram Bhatt
Shribhadra Pathak
Shambhujee Dikshit
Shrikrishna
Shrihunkar Devasharma
Shivnath
Seoprasad Sharma
Shalikhram Paramati
Seoram Dasputra
Shambhunath Panda
Shyamadeo Dube
Seolal Pathak
Shrinivas Pathak
Shambhuji
Shambhuji Shukul
Seovallabhjee
Shankarram Dube
Seoshankar Bhatt
Seoram
Shyam Vidyavagisha
Shrinath Tarkavagisha
Shivaprasad Vachaspati
Shivnarayan Bandyopadhyay
Somnath Bhatt Nyayalankar
Santu Singh
Sitaram Bhatt Puranic
Siddhakrishna Jani
Sooraj Kishen
Swami Bhatt
Surajram Jani
Surajjee Dube
Suraj Dutta Shukul
Sukaram Bhatt
Sadasheo Bhatt
Soorab Shastri
Sudhagir Tara
Sukhdev Joshi
Somnath Dikshit
Soorab Ram (Suratram?) Vyas
Siddhananda Tarkavagisha
Harikrishna Dikshit
Haribhat Dube
Harikishen
Hiraman Sharma
Hariram Pandit
Hari Panth
Haragovinda
Haranath Bhatt
Hariram Dikshit
Harikrishna
Haricharan Mallik
Haridev Tarkavagisha

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131. N.C.C., Vol. VII, p. 22; R., *Sans. Lit.*; *Parampara*, pp.108-09; For details of *Chetsinghavilasa*, see *Vidyamandira Patrika*, pp.20-30, Ramnagar Fort, Varanasi, 1978 V.S.
132. Krishnamachariar—*History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 663.
133. Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*, p. 411.
134. *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VII, p. 211.
135. R., *Sans. Lit.*, p. 202.
136. *Sanskrit University Catalogue*, Benares, Vol. IV, 1429. Henceforth, S. U. C.
137. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Part II, 10385.
138. N.C.C., Vol. I, p. 428.
139. S.U.C., Vol. III, 13957.
140. S.U.C., Vol. III, 13244.

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141. N.C.C., Vol. II, p. 103.
142. *Saraswati Sushama*, 1st year, 1st issue, April 1942, pp. 61, 62.
143. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-50, 51.
144. S.U.C., Vol. IV, 14811.
145. *Parampara*, p. 269.
146. For details, see *Parampara*, p. 176.
147. *Ibid.*
148. V.C.B., p.51; *Parampara*, pp. 28-48, 401.
149. See 'Shastrartha' section of this chapter.
150. *Parampara*, p.111.
151. For biographic details of Swami Bhaskarananda, see pp. 49-66; and Chapter V.
152. Nicholls, *Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Benares Pathashala*, p. 21.
153. See 'Sen-Mukherjee List', Das—*Banger Vahire Bangalee*, pp. 25-26.
154. *Parampara*, p. 149.
155. N.C.C., Vol. II, p. 241.
156. *Parampara*, Part II, pp. 20-27.
157. Bandyopadhyay, *Samvadpatre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. II, p. 748.
158. See *Parampara*, p. 165.
159. N.C.C., Vol. IV, p. 138.
160. Das, *Banger Vahire Bangalee*, p. 9; N.C.C., Vol. IV, p. 138.
161. Account of the Benares Sanskrit College, Chapter XIII.
162. Nicholls, *Sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Benares Pathashala*, p. 20.
163. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
164. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
165. *Saraswati Sushama*, 1st year, 1st issue, April 1942, p. 45- 47.
166. For details on Rajaram, see *Parampara*, pp. 158-66.
167. *Ibid.*, pp. 158-66.
168. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
169. For Parvatiya pandits, see *Hans*, 'Kashi Visheshank', p.129.
170. Das, *Banger Vahire Bangalee*, p. 222.
171. *Ibid.*, 'Sen-Mukherjee List'.
172. *Ibid.*
173. *Ibid.*, p.34.
174. R., *Sans. Lit.*, p. 196.
175. *Parampara*, p. 167.
176. N.C.C., Vol. IV, p.138.
177. 'Short History of Benares Government Sanskrit College', *Saraswati Sushama*, 1st year, 1st issue, April 1942, p. 19.
178. For details on Rajaram, see *Parampara*, pp. 158-66.
179. N.C.C., Vol. III, p. 289.
180. R., *Sans. Lit.*
181. S.U.C., Vol. III, No. 12143.
182. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, No. 11927.
183. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, No. 11990.
184. N.C.C., Vol. II, p. 110.

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186. *Ibid.*
187. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
188. Das, *Banger Vahire Bangalee*, p. 33.
189. *Ibid.*, 'Sen-Mukherjee List'.
190. *Parampara*, p. 111.
191. *Parampara*, pp. 158-66.
192. *Ibid.*
193. *Ibid.*
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195. Bandyopadhyay, *Samvadpatre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. III, pp. 549-50.
196. *Parampara*, pp. 158-66.
197. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
198. Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay, *Hariharananda Tirthaswami Sahitya Sadhak Charitamala*, 1st part, pp. 89-95, Calcutta.
199. *Ibid.*
200. *Saraswati Sushama*, 1st year, 1st issue, April 1942, p. 45.
201. *Samachar Darpan*, April 6, 1822, quoted in Bandyopadhyay, *Samvadpatre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. I, p. 14.
202. See Chapter V.
203. *Parampara*, p. 149.
204. William Hunter, *Narrative of a Journey from Agra to Oujein*, Vol. VII, pp. 210-11.
205. *Ibid.*, Footnote, pp. 220-21.
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207. Ahobal Shastri, *Gramanya Sutra*. See the entry of Ahobal Shastri in this chapter.
208. Bholanauth Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo*, Vol. I, p. 287.
209. *Calcutta Review* (Monthly), Vol. VI, pp. 209-10, July-December, 1846.
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211. COV., Duncan Records, Basta No. 2, List 18, 20.
212. Home Public, 4 June, 1781, 2139-42.
213. COV., Index to Duncan Records, List 8, Sl. No. 1047, Basta No. I, Vol. I.
214. *Account of the Benares Sanskrit College*, Chapter XIII.
215. Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo*, p. 285.
216. *Calcutta Review* (Monthly), Vol. VI, pp. 209-11, July-December 1846.
217. *Account of the Benares Sanskrit College*, Chapter XIII.
218. *Ibid.*
219. Bandyopadhyay, *Samvadpatre Sekaler Katha*, Vol. III, p. 15.
220. Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo*, p. 285.
221. Reginald Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 436-37. Heber referred to him as a Greek but did not mention his name.
222. Researches of J. Gennadius, *Miltiades*; A. Spyrou and Siegfried A. Schulz throw light on the life and works of Galanos.
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227. *Miltiades*, A. Spyrou—A paper on Galanos.
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254. *Ibid.*
255. *Abu Yahya Imam Khan Nausera*, Tarajim Olmaye Hadis Hind, pp. 348.
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258. *Ibid.*, p. 348.
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302. *Mishrabandhuvinod.*
303. *Ibid.*, p. 998.
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CHAPTER XIII

MODERN ACADEMIES

NEW EDUCATION AUGURS CHANGE

When the Sanskrit College, or *Pathashala* was founded in Varanasi in 1791[1], few people, if any, could foresee that this institution was destined to be the forerunner of many educational institutions which would produce such far-reaching consequences in the academic and socio-cultural life of the City. Prior to the establishment of these institutions, the educational system of the City had vigorously maintained its indigenous character. This character was to undergo revolutionary changes in quality and form with its contact with the West through British rule of India.

The Western system of education evolved out of experiments in the fields of education in Medieval Europe under the auspices of the Church. Even before the advent of the Modern Age the structure of educational systems had been moulded, with minor variations, in Italy, France, Britain and other European countries.

At the outset, the British Government did not impose any educational system upon its Indian subjects, for it was apprehensive of the adverse consequences of such an imposition. As a matter of policy, it refrained and made others refrain from initiating any activities that might adversely affect the political and commercial interests of the Government.

Thanks to the initiatives of some Indians and Europeans, a few educational institutions sprang up in different parts of India. The Government kept a close watch on these institutions, though it favoured some with minor funding. After several years of strict neutrality, the first major move by the Government in the field of education came in 1781 when Governor-General Warren Hastings agreed to offer regular financial support to the Calcutta Madrasa with a view to 'fitting Indians for the numerous offices of the British Government.'[2] Soon after, Sir William Jones of the Supreme Court founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. Through its literary collection and publications the Society was

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destined to play 'an important part in the cultural history of Modern India and of the Modern world as well, by making Ancient Indian thought available to Europe and European scientific scholarship available to India.'[3] Within a decade of the foundation of the Calcutta Madrasa and the Asiatic Society, the Sanskrit Pathashala, or the Sanskrit College, was founded in Varanasi in 1791. This college was 'designed to cultivate the laws, literature, and religion of the Hindus, and especially to supply qualified Hindu assistants to European judges'.[4] Like the Calcutta Madrasa, Sanskrit College was also regularly financed by the Government.

THE EXISTING CONDITION OF LEARNING

In the previous chapter, we got some idea of the educational systems existing in Varanasi at the time of the advent of the British, but before we get into the particulars of Sanskrit College and an outline of the modernization to come thereafter, let us review the systems that were in place.

There were three types of learning; Hindu classical, that is, Sanskrit that was taught and studied by the Hindus; Muslim classical, that is, Arabic and Persian, taught and studied mainly by Muslims and Hindu *Kayasthas*; and finally, a general or basic knowledge of accounts and vernacular learnt by the business community and others interested in doing so. All these disciplines were imparted in private seminaries conducted by individual teachers, each handling a group of students. Again, higher studies in Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian were not imparted in all these classical academies, as a good number of them were only devoted to the teaching of a basic knowledge in a particular field. In most cases of advanced studies, at least in Sanskrit, an individual teacher taught only one branch and instruction in more than one was rare. Obviously, a student hoping to gain proficiency in different branches of Sanskrit learning would have to approach a new teacher upon having completed years of study with earlier teachers.

Barring some conventions, there was no definite syllabus for a given subject, nor was there any strict time limit for covering a course of studies. In the absence of the printing press, students and teachers had to depend on manuscripts and, writing materials being rare, emphasis was given more on learning through rote, that is, by recitation and memorization. The tradition of special proficiency in a given branch of learning was maintained through the *shishya-parampara*, the succession of disciples.

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Almost everywhere, especially in the field of Sanskrit learning, education was imparted gratuitously and both the teacher and the student had to depend upon donations from generous individuals for their maintenance. Food was distributed free to students from alms-houses of the City.

Reverend William Tennant gives the following interesting account of the state of primary education in Varanasi towards the last quarter of the eighteenth century :[5]

> 'The education given at Benares is chiefly instituted for the Brahmins; that of the common people is extremely limited, but to them highly useful, and obtained at no great expense. Almost in every village there is a person employed in teaching the youth to read and write. As few books are entrusted to the perusal of the great body of the people, the amount of their learning is to form the characters, and to read manuscripts; and it is surprising how many even of the lowest servants, are able to keep accounts. I have found a Mussulman capable of this who could not read a sentence of the Coran. Here writing and reading are taught at the same time; the boys are collected upon a smooth flat of sand, and with the finger or a small reed form the letter there, which they learn to pronounce at the same time. As often as the space before each scholar is filled up with writing, it is effaced, and prepared for a new lesson: thus expense of both pens, inks, paper and even a house is avoided.'

According to this description, elementary education was open to all. Generally, students of a locality would seek admission to the neighborhood private seminary for such an education. Obviously, the question of the maintenance of such students did not arise at all.

Higher education, however, was restricted to the cultivation of classical learning and confined to a limited number of people. Though the technique and content of such an education was old-fashioned, these small seminaries were characterized by personal relationships between the teacher and the taught in a rather free and informal environment.

THE SANSKRIT PATHASHALA OR COLLEGE

The Sanskrit Pathashala (Sanskrit College) of Varanasi was foremost among the educational institutions partly or fully set up on Western lines and receiving Government grants regularly. It was also a pioneer institution among the modern institutions of India, imparting purely Hindu classical learning meant mainly for the Hindus. The establishment of the Sanskrit College as a formal learning institution, created a great stir with the locals and drew pointed attention from both official and non-official quarters of the City and elsewhere until the Calcutta Sanskrit College came into being in 1824.

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To examine how this College was transformed into a full-fledged university of the twentieth century after a long and chequered life of more than a century and a half is a fascinating study, but for our purpose, this historical review will close in the 1850s. A history of the College written by George Nicholls, Headmaster of the English Section in 1848, is an important source for early data, but the title of the book is a little misleading as the author did not write a systematic history of the College, he only presented a mass of disorganized data.

The genesis of this College has been shrouded in mystery. Pandit Kashinath Bhattacharya, a Bengalee by birth, and himself a great scholar of Sanskrit,* and who was close to many distinguished Englishmen, including Charles Wilkins, the British scholar of Sanskrit, and acted as the Pandit to the local British Residency, was possibly responsible for the foundation of the College. According to a letter from Kashinath to Lord Mornington in Persian, which was received on June 3, 1801, the following were the circumstances of establishing the college : Sir Charles Wilkins went to the City a little before 1780 to study Sanskrit. Some of the local pandits refused to teach him while some others could not teach him well. Finally, Wilkins was introduced to Pandit Kashinath, who instructed him to his entire satisfaction. When Calcutta Madrasa was founded in 1781 for the cultivation of Islamic studies, Kashinath pleaded with Wilkins to found a Sanskrit college along the same lines. Warren Hastings approved Kashinath's plan and wanted the latter to meet him, but when Kashinath reached Calcutta, Hastings had already left India.

According to another version, when Kashinath was ready to set out for Calcutta to place the proposal with Hastings, he was persuaded not to do so and urged to approach Jonathan Duncan, the local British Resident, who readily agreed and opened communications with the authorities in Calcutta. This finally led to the establishment of the College on October 28, 1791,[6] with Kashinath as its first appointed Principal.

If credit for the idea of this institution goes to Pandit Kashinath, as it should, then credit for its realization is due to Duncan, whose initiative and patronization made such a novel institution possible in an orthodox environment such as Varanasi.

OBJECTIVES AND RULES

Jonathan Duncan explained the objectives and advantages of

* For further details on Kashinath, see Chapter XVI.

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establishing the Sanskrit College and also proposed rules for the institution in a letter to Earl Cornwallis, Governor-General, on January 1, 1792.[7]

It is evident from this correspondence that the three objectives behind the institution were: (1) to patronize the cultivation of Hindu laws, literature and religion, thereby appeasing Hindu subjects; (2) to invest the college with 'the great difficulty of collecting complete treatises on the Hindu religion, laws, arts and sciences, a defect and loss which the permanency of a college at Benares must be peculiarly well adapted to correct and recover'; and (3) to supply qualified Hindu court pandits to help the European judges in administering justice.

The Governor-General at once acceded to Duncan's proposal with a request to restrict the expenses to 14,000 sicca rupees for the first year only, which would be increased to 20,000 sicca rupees from the next year onwards.[8]

THE PREDOMINANCE OF BRAHMINS

Though nowhere was it clearly written or stated that the Sanskrit College was primarily established for Brahmin students, its rules and regulations clearly put emphasis on the supremacy of Brahmins in various capacities. For example, Rule No. 6 provided that, '... it would be better that all except the physicians should be a Brahmin'. Moreover, according to Rule No. 7, '... the Brahmin teachers to have a preference over strangers in succeeding to the headship, and the students, in succeeding to professorship, if they shall on examination be found qualified'. Again, according to Rule No. 10, the sacred branches of learning were to be examined by a committee of Brahmins nominated only by the Resident.

There were exceptions to the Brahmin monopoly, however. For example, Munshi Thakurdas, appointed the Persian instructor on October 30, 1813 was a non-Brahmin.[9] Being that Ayurveda could be taught by a Vaidya, either Brahmin or non-Brahmin, it was also likely that the same subject was also studied by both Brahmins and non-Brahmins. Though it is not known when the first non-Brahmin student was admitted to the College, the report of the *First Annual Convocation* of the College, held in 1821, informs us that a few non-Brahmin students were already studying there. These non-Brahmin students studied either Ayurveda or Persian.

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So far as Persian is concerned, it appears from the Report of the Annual Public Meeting of the Local Committee in Febuary 1837[10], no Persian scholar (the total being 29) studied Sanskrit and, likewise, no student of Sanskrit studied Persian. So it appears that most, if not all, of the Persian classes were non-Brahmin students. Among the total number of 277 students in 1827, 249 Brahmin students actually studied Sanskrit, while the remaining non-Brahmin students, consisting of eighteen *khetris*, nine *kaets* and one *agarwala*, most probably studied Arabic and Persian.[11]

Though the European principals of the College did not like the idea of showing any favouritism towards Brahmins—the Hindu caste system bearing no special significance to them—for all practical purposes, the predominance of Brahmin staff and students continued even during their tenures.

THE SITE

The college first held classes in a rented house adjoining that of Munshi Kashi Prasad near the Maidagin Tank.[12] This was a large square building built round a small open area[13] consisting of a ground floor and two upper stories divided into two courts, galleried above and below.[14]

THE ESTABLISHMENT: THE PROFESSORS

At the outset, the staff of the College consisted of nine professors including the principal. The following are details of the institution in the year it was founded.

Name	Designation	Salary per month
Kashinath Bhattacharya	Principal Kashinath to teach *Sadharana Vidya*	Rs. 200
Vireshwar Seth	Professor of *Vyakarana*, Panini, *Bhashya* and Rig Veda	Rs. 100
Ramachandra Tara	Professor of Vedanta	Rs. 100
Ramprasad Tarka Panchanan	Professor of *Nyaya* Shastra	Rs. 100
Soolepa (or Shobha) Shastri	Professor of *Mimamsa*	Rs. 100
Gosain Anand Gir	Professor of Purana and Cabe (*Kavya*) Shastra	Rs. 100
Luchmiput Joshi	Professor of *Jyotisha* Shastra	Rs. 80

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Gangaram Bhatt	Professor of *Vaya* (*Vaidyaka*)	Rs. 80
Shyamaprasad Bhattacharya (son of Kashinath Bhattacharya)	Professor of *Dharmashastra*	Rs. 100
	Sub Total	Rs. 960[15]

THE STUDENTS

Name and locality	Allowance
Ramkanai of Bengal	Rs. 15
Hanu Joshi of Gujarat	Rs. 10
Jayaram Bhatt of Maharashtra	Rs. 15
Kashinath Siddhantavagish of Bengal	Rs. 10
Durga Charan of Kanauj	Rs. 10
Govind Narain of Gouḍ	Rs. 10
Hardeo Joshi	Rs. 8
Manorath Tewari	Rs. 8
Gauri Prasad	Rs. 10
Sub Total	Rs. 96[16]

OFFICE STAFF

1. Sehisram Bermachary (Brahmachari?)	keeping books, etc.	Rs. 10
2. Nuncoolal Kayet	as a writer	Rs. 10
3. 4 Peons		Rs. 14
4. 2 *Fraush*		Rs. 6
5. 1 Brahmin to ferry water		Rs. 4
	Sub Total	Rs. 44

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE

House rent @ Rs. 30 per month	Rs. 30
Paper, ink, etc., per month	Rs. 8
Total per month[17]	Rs. 1138

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THE FIRST AVAILABLE ACCOUNT OF THE COLLEGE

The institution became the cynosure, especially of the educated class, of the City right from its inception. It is impossible today to appreciate how much difficulty must have been faced by the founders in mustering the pandits and students under one roof to take part in an experiment, sponsored by foreigners, breaching the current traditions. It was reported that early suspicions among the local Hindus as to Government's secret motives behind granting funds for the College[18] were gradually declining within the first year.[19] Having overcome these initial ordeals, the institution followed a line of compromise between the traditional and western systems.

Jonathan Duncan, the Resident, and Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, the Magistrate of the City, accompanied by two assistants and some other gentlemen, paid their first visit to the college on November 17, 1791, just 20 days after its founding, amidst a massive gathering of people of all denominations. The following is an interesting account of this visit sent by a local man to the *Calcutta Gazette* for publication.[20]

> 'Pundit Cassinut ... who is constituted the Head or Principal of the College, waited upon Mr. Duncan at his town house about 9 o'clock in the morning, whence he conducted him and the rest of the company to the building at which the institution is at present held. The room which the President (W. A. Brooke) had prepared for the reception of the Resident's visit was a large hall on the north side of the square of the floor. To this the company was conducted, and on entering it Mr. Duncan was saluted by the President in elegant Sanskrit verses composed by him for the occasion, and in return to which Mr. Duncan presented him with a *Khelat* in a distinguished manner. This act of grace was immediately proclaimed aloud in the square in the usual form. The Resident and company sat down for a few minutes with the President, during which time they received offerings of garlands of flowers from some of the ushers and students, who were in waiting to present them. Mr. Duncan received a particular and solemn address from Anund Gheer Gosayn, Professor of Purana Shastra, who first delivered it in the original Sanskrit metre, in which it had been composed for the occasion, and afterwards in Persian, into which language the learned author made an elegant poetical version of it.
>
> Mr. Duncan visited the eight public schools of which the foundation consists separately, in each of which he found the respective Master or Professor, sitting in the midst of his pupils; but on the resident's entrance the Master immediately rose up, spoke a complimentary address suitable to the occasion and received the honorary dress, on which mark of distinction proclamation was made as above mentioned, some of the Masters had perhaps their pupils to join with them in repeating the address, which has a most pleasing effect, and in all of the schools the garlands of flowers were offered.'

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The foregoing description provides hints as to how the College was viewed by an indigenous observer. It would seem the institution was first viewed as a foundation consisting of eight complementary schools, then as an institution consisting of eight departments. It also appears from this description that the number of students enrolled on opening day increased within a fortnight. There were only nine students on the opening day, but at the time of Duncan's visit, each of the eight teachers was described as sitting amongst his students, indicating that more than nine students were present.

The correspondent's remark that 'this institution which cannot fail to reflect lasting honour on our nation and age' and his following report about the sentiment of the teachers as expressed in their addresses to Duncan that, 'No language however can express the eloquence and pathos with which the addresses were delivered by the respective learned authors, whose accents and gestures indicated the liveliest sense of the public favour and attention shown in this foundation to their nation collectively and to themselves individually,'[21] testify to the fulfilment of one of the primary objectives; the British Government's winning of the appreciation and support of its Hindu subjects.

INITIAL PROBLEMS

However the early days of the institution did not pass smoothly owing to various adverse circumstances. First of all there was the lack or inadequacy of experience and organizational skills necessary to run such an institution on the part of the first Indian Principal. Limited independence of the teachers, who had hitherto enjoyed full freedom in their private seminaries, might have caused problems for the principal in orienting them to a new system. Moreover, though the sole responsibility for the management of the institution rested with the Resident, it was not an easy task for him either as any errant strategy in this regard could undo the early achievements and long-term expectations of the College. Duncan's transfer from Varanasi to Bombay left problems unsolved.

THE COLLEGE COMMITTEE

The first College Committee, comprising Samuel Davis, the Magistrate of Benares, Captain Wilford, a distinguished Sanskrit scholar, and G. F. Cherry, the Governor-General's Agent, was set up in 1798, with Cherry as the President to look after College matters.

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CHARGES AGAINST THE PRINCIPAL

The affairs of the College took a dramatic turn when a new Committee, consisting of John Neave, Dean and Wilford, investigated complaints levelled against no less than the Principal Kashinath himself by some teachers including Pandit Shibnath and Pandit Jattashankar. After investigating the case, the Committee brought several charges against Kashinath, namely, preparation of false bills showing names of fictitous pandits and scholars, extortion of money under various pretences from both the pandits and the scholars, misappropriation of money sanctioned for purchasing paper for giving seven writers to copy books for the College, and lastly, not keeping financial records for seven years.[22] The Committee asked the Principal to make out a fresh bill from which the names of the fictitous scholars and pandits were to be omitted and the total sum, alleged to be exacted or misappropriated, was to be deducted.

Kashinath replied that he would never comply with such orders from the Committee[23] and the matter was brought to the notice of the Government which ordered the Committee to dismiss the Principal.[24] Accordingly, Kashinath, the founding Principal of the College, was summarily dismissed in April of 1801 from his post and the College.[25] The Committee was apprehensive of possible consequences, but nothing untoward occurred and Kashinath 'quitely directed his *naib* to give up the keys' to Pandit Jattashankar, his successor.[26] Next year, a *parwana* was issued against Kashinath requesting him to surrender the complete manuscripts, manuscript leaves and library lock and key in his possession to Jattashankar.[27] Kashinath presented the matter to Lord Wellesly, the Governor-General, once in Buxar and then in Varanasi, but to no avail.

It is surprising, indeed shocking, that such an illustrious scholar and distinguished person, a man endowed with so many rare qualities, a man that had played such a significant role in the founding of this pioneering institution, could be accused of committing such reproachable acts. In fact, Committee member John Neave declared Kashinath 'the greatest villain' he had ever seen.[28] We can only know the official version of this matter, save one letter from Kashinath written to Lord Mornington in his own defence, but this only mentions his past services toward the foundation of the College.

Therefore, it appears that Kashinath had responsibility in the mismanagement in the College during his tenure, but he should not solely be held responsible, as the integrity of some of his colleagues was not beyond

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question either. For example, Pandits Vireshwar, Shubha Shastri and Jattashankar complained that some allowances had been withheld from them by the Principal, but it appeared on examination that they had included in their claims allowances that had already been paid to their students.[29] Again, Kashinath, while still Principal, alleged that some of his teachers were in dereliction of their duties in the following communication of August 1798 :

> 'During the last four months (in early 1798) five of the twelve pandits attached to this ... Madrassa (Pathashala) having entered into collusion, have been in the practice of going daily to the *amlah* (high ranking employees) of several of the gentlemen here (in the City) in consequence of which the duties (works) of the Madrassa (Pathashala) are impeded. They disregard my remonstrances on the subject. I have already mentioned this circumstance to the Gentlemen of the Court of Appeal as well as to the Judge of this District, who intimated to me in reply that they could not act in the instance without order from Government.'

Then Kashinath appealed to the Governor-General thus:

> 'Your lordship will authorize either the Gentlemen of the Court of Appeal or the Judge of this District to investigate this circumstance, and to do whatever may appear to them to be proper.'

This suggests that neither the local administration nor the Managing Committee of the College took much interest in the college matters, especially after Duncan's departure from the City in 1795. Consequently, the smooth and effective running of the Institution was affected, and mismanagement and malpractice by the staff,[30] alleged to have continued for a considerable period, 'tended materially to defeat the objects of the institution.'[31] Moreover, the Committee arbitrarily reduced the number of scholarships, which fomented discontent among the scholars.[32]

In 1811, Governor-General Lord Minto proposed additional rules to existing regulations, the most important being the introduction of pensions to distinguished teachers on condition that 'they deliver instructions to pupils at their own houses.'[33] But it would appear that almost from the beginning, the college was deprived of the valuable services of the most honourable and learned pandits of the City. Except for a very few, such pandits were reluctant to accept professorial positions, especially under a foreign Government, and they would prefer the irregular support of their fellow countrymen to accepting a salary from the British.

THE NEW PRINCIPAL

With Kashinath's dismissal, Pandit Jattashankar, one of the chief complainants against him and a member of the teaching staff, was

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appointed Principal as a temporary arrangement until a duly qualified individual could be found. This was because, according to Captain Wilford, the only member of the Committee capable of determining the qualifications of a new Principal[34], Jattashankar, was deficient in the necessary learning and respectability that would entitle him to fill the vacancy.[35] Jattashankar continued in the post for four years and it was perhaps in July of 1805[36] that Ramananda Pandit, a resident of Jaipur, succeeded him and served the institution in that capacity till the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century.[37] Ramananda was the last Indian principal of Sanskrit College during the whole of the nineteenth century, and it would be nearly hundred years before Dr Ganganath Jha would be appointed in 1918. Captain Wilford, spoke frequently in terms of 'high commendation' of the learned Ramananda, whose 'respectability of character joined to the urbanity of his manners rendered him in every other respect fitted for the office (of Principal).'[38]

During Ramananda's tenure, the indefinite period of reading in the College and enjoying scholarships was reduced to twelve years in 1813.[39] In the same year it was ordered that a *Munshi* of the Hindu caste be engaged to instruct a Persian class; this was to enable willing students to learn Persian, then the language of the judicial court, and to translate judgements into Persian if and when appointed Court Pandit.[40]

The Committee continued to look after the College and members occasionally visited. On one such occasion in April 1813, Bird, Magistrate of the City and a member of the Committee, found that Ramprasad Tarkalankar, a veteran Bengalee Professor of *Nyaya* Shastra, appeared 'old enough' to retire and be pensioned. In fact, he was 103 years old, entirely blind and unable to move without assistance, and still carrying out his duties. Ramprasad had been a professor since the inception of the institution and was noted for his learning and attention to duty. He was subsequently awarded a pension of Rs. 50 per month with a *parwana* testifying the Committee's 'approbation of his service.'[41]

DISORDER IN THE COLLEGE : APPOINTMENT OF GALANOS AS 'SUPERINTENDENT'

Unfortunately, the sincerity of Ramprasad was not so common in the institution, for the Principal occasionally complained of the dereliction of duty by teachers, not only with respect to manuscripts but also to teaching. The names of Bireshwar Pandit, Sheonath Pandit and Jayram Bhatt were

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particularly mentioned in this regard. The Principal also alleged that the character of Pandit Jayram had sunk into disrepute.[42] Thus the situation at the College was getting beyond the control of the Principal and the teaching suffered greatly. But the Committee did little to improve the deplorable condition, save signing payrolls and routine letters to the Collector requesting payment of several pupil accounts.

H. Sharp records in his Educational Records, Part I, that in 1815 a European Superintendent was appointed in the Benares Sanskrit College but he did not appear to have continued in that office for long as 'the resuscitation of the post was postponed in 1829' after it had been observed that 'the college was doing very little good.'[43]

Both Sharp and J. Nicholls, author of the History of the Sanskrit College, were, for reasons unknown, silent about the name and other details of the Superintendent. It is known from other Government Records that Demetrius Galanos, the Greek Orientalist of Varanasi, was this 'Superintendent' in question. But such record is also very precise about Galanos' role in the College; whatever scanty data it contains on Galanos has already been presented in the preceding chapter in connection with Galanos' cultivation of Sanskrit. Strangely enough, Galanos himself also appears to be silent about his assignment at the college in his letters and other private papers with the result that none of his biographers has mentioned anything about Galanos' connection with the College. Consequently we know almost nothing about the details of his tenure.

From a communication from W. W. Bird, Magistrate and College Committee member, we know this much that Galanos was appointed College Superintendent of Pupils' Studies to report on student progress. He was expected to act as a liaison between the teachers and the College Committee on the one hand, and to teach on the other, an assignment that does not seem well defined. Moreover, though Galanos was entrusted to monitor routine studies, he was probably not given the administrative power to accomplish this task. Against such a backdrop, we can presume that it was hardly possible for Galanos to fulfill the duties for which he had been employed, to improve the condition of a sick and failing college. Finally, the post of European Superintendent of the Pupils' Studies was revoked.

The condition worsened into an acute financial crisis, threatening both teachers and students with utter distress by the non-payment of salaries and allowances from June 1817 to April 1818. Sir Frederick Hamilton, the

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Collector, refused to allow any of the College bills alleging that under orders from the Accountant General and the Sadar Board of Revenue, he was precluded from paying any College bills without audit (of the college account). On further request by the Committee, the Collector agreed to advance Rs. 3,219.8 to be 'applied to the relief of the distress to which the college has been reduced until the Committee can hear from Government.' But still no word from Government was forthcoming until May 7, 1818, when the officiating Civil Auditor, W. A. Oakes, informed the Committee that 'the Collector of Benares has been instructed to continue payment to the College as heretofore, and to discharge all arrears of accounts of the Hindu College.'[44]

THE ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

A two-man Enquiry Committee consisting of H. H. Wilson and Edward Fell, set up by the College Committee in 1820, was a landmark in the early history of the College. The Enquiry Committee took great pains to investigate each department as minutely as possible and found many flaws. It placed important recommendations before a meeting of the College Committee consisting of W. A. Brooke, Sir F. Hamilton, Bart, W. W. Bird, H. H. Wilson and Lieutenant Edward Fell on March 14, 1820. It appears that most of the Enquiry Committee recommendations redressing the many defects of the Institution were accepted, granting the College a new lease of life.

The Enquiry Committee's report throws light on various aspects of the institution, including the existing state of teaching and learning, and offered valuable suggestions for improvement.

DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE COLLEGE

Admission and class promotion

From the very outset no minimum qualifications for admission into any branch of study had been set. Hence, an entrant, it seems, was permitted to attend any class irrespective of his background. Consequently, one wonders how, and with what result, a student scarcely able to decipher characters, with no idea of any distinction between a noun and verb, could plunge confidently into the mysteries of Law, Logic or Divinity.[45]

It was now suggested by the Enquiry Committee that a student upon seeking College admittance, at an acceptable age, would be expected to undergo an examination in rudimentary grammar as explained in the

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various elementary treatises ordinarily taught and any student proved unacquainted with these basics would not be admitted to any advanced studies. He would first attend an elementary Grammar Class, studying the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* and the *Sutras* of Panini, and be required to remain engaged in this department of study alone for two years.[46] If, at the end of this period, any student was found deficient, the Superientendent might extend the term by any period, not exceeding twelve months. If at the end of this additional term the student could still not qualify, he would be dismissed from the College.

At the end of two years or three years, as the case might be, the student should combine his grammatical studies in a higher class with those of polite literature, including Prosody and Rhetoric. In this course and in the higher classes of Grammar, he might be allowed to continue for three years more. During some portion of this time, he should also acquire elementary rules of Arithmetic as far, at least, as the end of the Division. Then, at the expiration of these five years, if he had exercised any diligence, or was possessed of any ability, he should be fully qualified 'to enter upon more important and more abstruse studies, in the selection of which, for the remaining seven years of his stay, he might safely be left to his discretion.'[47]

Though there was no special age restriction for admission to the College suggested by the Enquiry Committee, it was later decided that candidates must not be under 12 or more than 18 years of age.[48]

A Picture of Different Classes

The *Vyakarana* Class

The College Committee decided on the October 23, 1815, that to expedite the progress of students through the *Vyakarana* class, the Rector and the *Nyaya* Pandit should render assistance to the *Vyakarana* Professor. Students who might have become proficient in *Vyakarana* but could not be promoted to higher classes in consequence of there being no vacancies were to be employed in teaching the junior students and remunerated accordingly.[49] This system of seniors teaching junior students was not, however, foreign, though the proposed system of remuneration was novel. Even with all these arrangements there was little improvement in grammatical knowledge of the average student. The examiners of the Committee observed with dismay that although several of the students of this class had been engaged in study for four to five years, they had not

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advanced beyond the simplest rudiments, which barred their future progress. Of the 17 students in the class, only three met the new requirements; of these, a student named Parameshwar Dayal ranked highest, although he had been in the College for more than eleven years and was remarkably deficient in the power of applying the knowledge he possessed. The other two students had made great progress in the time they were enrolled, and one, especially, had a very superior knowledge of the application of grammar and of language in general.

The examiners held that the study of grammar itself offered some remarkable specimens of defective methods, but they did not specify these defects.

The *Dharmashastra* Class

The professors of this branch seemed disgusted and indifferent, as they were compelled to teach letters and words when they ought to have been employed in communicating thoughts and ideas. Only one or two of the students were given credit for any proficiency in the books studied, and none for any theoretical or practical knowledge of Law.[50] In fact, there was no student in the entire class who could claim to have the knowledge expected of him.

The *Nyaya* Class

The Professor of this class was a good person, but the fact that he taught outside the College as well was suspected of diminishing his zeal for his college students.[51] After examining the students, it was found that their studies were still confined to elementary works, and did not embrace the difficult treatises they were engaged in pursuing. But upon consideration that they were still beginners, it may be said that they had made some progress.[52]

The *Mimamsa* Class

This class was in a very lamentable condition, but no blame was attributable to the students as they were, and had been for some time, without a professor.[53]

The *Purana* Class

The non-existence of a Professor was put forward as an apology for the students of this class in giving improper answers to the questions put by the Enquiry Committee. The class was of a limited extent and of lesser proficiency, as the students had poor knowledge of Sanskrit.[54]

The *Jyotisha* Class

The subjects taught in this class extended from the rudiments of

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Arithmetic to the loftier doctrines of Astronomy and Algebra; Geometry and Astrology were also included within its limits.[55] On examination, it was found that so far as Arithmetic was concerned, there was not one who could boast of any great acquirement. Not a single student had excelled beyond the Rules of Divison, even, as in one case, when eleven years had been spent on the study. Progress in Algebra was also unsatisfactory. One student of Astrology honestly confessed that he had taken great pains in his studies, yet had accomplished little.[56] Another student named Lajja Shankar was tolerably acquainted with the formation of the globe and the ordinary phenomena relating to it, in its connection with other planets as held in Hindu tradition. With reference to the time he had been in college and the usual dilatory mode of study, his progress was creditable. Considering his talents and application, he had made some real progress.[57] The Examiners suggested that it might perhaps be advisable to exclude this sort of study from the Jyotish class, as it was calculated to mislead those who had no talent into a very unprofitable expenditure of time and labour.[58]

The *Ayurveda* Class (Medical Science)

The course followed in this class was confined to a few passages learnt by rote or a few easy sentences to be studied so as to be able to translate the words. But as the fundamentals of the knowledge of the human form, the causes and cures of disease, or even the names of the substances of the Hindu Materia Medica remained outside the scope of the existing syllabus, the class could not have had the slightest utility.[59] Again, the age and evident infirmities of the entrenched instructor was also an impediment to the reorganization of the Ayurveda class.

The *Vedanta* Class

The Vedanta class was by far the most creditable of all in the Institution; the four young men had all attained respectable proficiency and one student in particular had studied with eminent success.

The *Vedas* Class

As the study of the Vedas was held especially sacred to Hindus, the Enquiry Committee, being Europeans, was not allowed to investigate into the progress of students in the Vedas class. The Committee made the following remark in this regard: 'We made no attempts therefore to ascertain the progress of the students in this department beyond conversing with their teachers respecting the system of and object of study.' They did, however, come to the conclusion that the only thing learnt in the four Veda classes was the repetition of texts by rote, as the teacher of the class

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professed neither to teach nor even to understand the sense of the language of the Vedas.[60]

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

The examiners made the following general observations applicable to all the classes. Firstly, there was dilatory mode of study in the College.[61] Secondly, there was 'the utter absence of classification, properly so termed, and the want of those instructions as honourable as useful, by which pupils are in all seminaries discriminated, and arranged according to their different degrees of proficiency and the different subjects of their more or less advanced studies.'[62] Thirdly, there was the lack of elementary knowledge of Sanskrit among almost all students. Lastly, and most importantly, there did not appear to be any means of enforcing diligence or attendance or proper discipline. Consequently, the Principal had little or no control over the teachers or the students.[63] Along with this difficulty, the first Indian principals and their colleagues were unfamiliar with the various systems gradually being introduced in the College. Unfortunately, the urgency and necessity of providing adequate orientation and guidance in this regard was realized in no quarter.

It is quite probable that all the Enquiry Committee's observations regarding student performance may not necessarily reflect the facts, at least in certain cases, as it was not unlikely that the young students were extremely nervous facing the Europeans as examinees. Nevertheless, the report of the Examiners sufficiently revealed that the overall picture of the Institution was far from satisfactory. Most of the important objectives of the Institution remained unfulfilled, like the study and culture of Hindu law, Sanskrit language and literature did not reach an optimum standard. The anticipated supply of Hindu law assistants to the European Judges from this college was not forthcoming. According to the Examiners, there was 'no pupil calculated in the lowest degree to discharge such an important function.'[64] Hence, the Examiners were not at all unjustified in using such strong terms in declaring, 'the Pathashala has done little more than contribute to the maintenance of a certain number of pandits and pupils amongst whom literature and study have merely served as pleas for securing such a maintenance.'[65]

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

With a view to improving this dire situation the recommendations of the Enquiry Committee included :

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That rules of admission be framed and classification of the courses made (which has already been mentioned above).

That students be given 'a slight superstructure of general reading to a grammatical foundation, which could enable them to prosecute more abstruse subjects later.'[66]

That it would be 'just and proper to hold out reward as well as punishment to excite the youth to exertion by hope as well as fear.'

That due to a want of means amongst the young students, and based on Hindu principles and customs and institutions of the land, the commingling of student maintenance with his tuition must probably be recognized.

That upon a student's leaving one class for another after completing a course, a certificate of proficiency in the one completed should be given to the student, signed by the Professor and with the confirming countersignature of the Superintendent of the College.

That on the student's finally leaving the College, another certificate of proficiency in the class or classes attended during his studentship signed by the (College) Committee, should be granted to him as testimony thereof that would be advantageous as well as creditable to the holder, for it might perhaps be hereafter required to testify to the qualification of those students to become candidates for employment in any line 'under the members of the Honourable Company's service.'[67]

But the most significant among all the suggestions was the decision to discontinue the post of the Indian Principal who would always, according to the committee, 'prove useless and perhaps worse.'[68] Instead a European Superintendent was to be appointed to sufficiently meet 'the want of effective control, the absence of which has led to a total deficiency of arrangement in the order of study, and utter want of diligence, and zeal in its prosecution.'[69]

It was expected that the pandits on the staff would thus be brought into contact with a European head in whom they would not only be able to place that confidence which, according to the committee, 'was generally more implicity placed in the European than in the Indian character, even by the Indians themselves, but also in whom they would find an individual of European origin who was capable of appreciating their studies and acquirements.'[70] The particular duties of the Superintendent were proposed to include personal attendance at the College as often as necessary to observe and enforce the attendance of the pandits and students and their general attention to their duties.[71]

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ANNUAL EXAMINATION AND CONVOCATION

In accordance with the recommendations of the Enquiry Committee, Lieutenant Edward Fell, then secretary of the College Committee and a member of the Enquiry Committee, was appointed Superintendent of Sanskrit College. Having once been revoked, the office of Superintendent was reinstated with greater authority. Within a short period of Fell taking charge of the College, it started showing sign of improvement. This was reflected in an 1821 account of the College[72] sent by a correspondent for publication in the *Calcutta Gazettee* meant for those readers who 'take an interest in the intellectual improvement of the natives of British India'.[73] This informative and interesting account described, in addition to other pieces of valuable information, details of the first Convocation of the College, which was held before a distinguished gathering. The Convocation created a great sensation in the community and on this occasion the College received a sum of Rs. 4378/- as a donation from the local elite, including a lump sum amount of Rs. 1000 from Maharaja Uditnarain, the Kashi Naresh. The account reads as follows :[74]

> 'The Banares College comprehends the following 15 classes : the four Vedas; the Vedanta; Mimamsa and Sanchya (Samkhya), or different philosophical and theological systems; Nyaya or Logic; Vaidya or Medicine; Dharma or Law; a class of Poetry and Rhetoric; two grammar classes, and two classes for the numerical sciences, from Arithmetic to Astronomy. These classes contain nearly a hundred students, all with a few exceptions of the Brahmanical order, but natives of every part of India from Telingana to Nepal. Most of the students receive a small monthly stipend, but there are now many out-students who have no pecuniary inducement to attend the College, and there is a decided tendency to the increase of this latter description of scholars, since the establishment has received an augmented proportion of public attention. Students are admitted from the age of 12 to 18, but in all cases it is expected that they shall have acquired the requisite elementary knowledge, and are only admitted after undergoing an examination in Sanskrit Grammar. A regular course of study is then laid down, to complete which the term of 12 years is allotted. Diligent attendance is enforced by a strict supervision, and the degree of progress ascertained by a quarterly examination of the classes, both conducted under the authority of a Committee of Superintendence, by the able Sanskrit scholar who holds the situation of their Secretary. To reward industry, and stimulate application, an annual exhibition of the proficiency of the head pupils, with a public presentation of rewards to the most distinguished has been established, and it was the primary occurrence of this part of the new arrangements which has given rise to the present communication.
>
> The first annual examination of the pupils took place in December last, and on the 1st of January, a numerous party of Civil and Military officers, the ladies of the

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station and of the most distinguished natives residing at and near the City, assembled at the house of Mr. Brooke, the Governor-General's Agent, and President of the Committee, to witness the disputations (*shastrartha*) by the pupils of the Institution in five distinct branches of Literature, and in the following order.

SUBJECT	TOPIC
1st Grammar Class:	A QUESTION ON PROSODY
1st Opponent:	Jayanarayan
2nd Opponent:	Ramasahaya
Moderator:	(Pandit) Vitthala Shastri
2nd Grammar Class:	ON THE NATURE OF INFLECTIONS
1st Opponent:	Shivaprasada
2nd Opponent:	Shyamadatta
Moderator:	(Pandit) Sri Kantha Mishra
Nyaya Class:	ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE SYSTEMS OF VARIOUS PHILOSOPHY
1st Opponent:	Shivadihala (Sivadayala?)
2nd Opponent:	Damodara Bhatta
Moderator:	(Pandit) Chandranarayan Bhattacharya
Mimamsa Class :	ON THE PRACTICAL PART OF RELIGION AND DEVOTION
1st Opponent:	Sambhuchandra
2nd Opponent:	Mathuranath
Moderator:	(Pandit) Subhashastri Tailanga
Vedanta Class:	ON ABSTRACT AND SPECULATIVE WORSHIP
1st Opponent:	Umaram
2nd Opponent:	Kedaranath
Moderator:	(Pandit) Dhanpati Mishra
Law Class:	HOW PARTITION OF HERITAGE AMONG MARRIED AND UNMARRIED BROTHERS SHOULD BE MADE
1st Opponent:	Lakshmi Kant
2nd Opponent:	Rama Chatta
Moderator:	(Pandit) Vireshwara Shesha

When the disputations had concluded the following appropriate address to the Pandits and Pupils was pronounced in the Sanskrita language by the Secretary, Captain Fell, in the name of the Committee:

"Pandits and Pupils, I am desired by the Gentlemen composing the Committee, to express to you the high satisfaction they have derived from the very favourable report of the progress of the students, evinced by the late examination.

The attention shown by the Pandits to their respective classes has not escaped the serious consideration of the Committee; and it affords them the greatest pleasure to think that the Benares institution must, with the same continued care on the part of the Pandits, and perseverence on the part of the Pupils, be most fully established

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as a seminary of the very first order; and further, that the proud consolation of being a material cause of the restoration of Sanskrita Literature, will be applicable to this institution; indeed, it behoves you all most seriously to reflect, that the revival of fading Hindu lore, as well as the fame of the College, rests entirely on the exertions and talents displayed by you as Members of this Government establishment.

The commencement is indeed highly flattering, and the Committee is determined to hold out encouragement to a continuation of the same course that has been adopted, by distributing prizes to the most distinguished scholars, and to report to the Most Noble the Governor-General-in -Council, this favourable presage of the literary fame of the College. At the same time, I am desired to acquaint you that, having in view the good name of this public seminary, so liberally endowed, the Committee has resolved to remove from the establishment any Member who may be neglectful of the particular duties allotted to him."

The most distinguished scholars of the different classes were then individually called, and the President and Members of the Committee distributed the prizes awarded.

The whole of the procedure was contemplated with the highest satisfaction and delight by the Natives present, and the occurrence has not only inspired them with a momentary sensation of pride and gratitude for the honours and attention thus paid to their learning and sacred language, but it has extended its influence to a more permanent beneficial result. Several of the most distinguished and opulent of the native gentlemen of Benares, including the Rajah, Maharaja Udit Narayan, having expressed, we understand, a wish to be permitted to assist the funds of the College, and establish annual rewards for eminent proficiency; there is every prospect therefore that the College will now fulfil the object of its foundation and in its dissemination of much real and useful knowledge, as well as in its keeping up a spirit of liberal and rational emulation, will confer most essential benefits upon the Hindus themselves, whilst it will save their ancient language and literature from the total darkness that threatened to overwhelm it in the land of its nativity. The advantages of this institution are indeed not limited to the narrow field of its own direct operation; its locality enhances its importance, and the myriads who annually leave Benares on their return from pilgrimage must carry away with them the knowledge of its existence, and they will then bear testimony in every part of India to the liberal spirit which founded, which fosters and perpetuates the institution.'

The following year, the Annual Prize distribution ceremony took place on December 22, in the house of W. A. Brooke and the distinguished people who assembled there presented nearly 1000 rupees in the form of prizes to the students and donated Rs. 4, 378 to the College Fund, which included the lump sum contributions of Rs. 1000 by Maharaja Uditnarain and of Rs. 500 by Babu Shivnarain Singh and Shitala Bahu, the wife of Biswambhar Pandit.[75]

NEW DEPARTMENTS

It should be mentioned here that all subjects introduced and posts for professors created in the College in 1791 did not continue later on. For

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example, the studies of the Vedas were discontinued in 1828.[76] Ayurveda lost its importance in 1823 when the professor of this subject was also entrusted with teaching the Puranas.[77] The Puranas too then ceased to be a separate department in 1835.[78] The Department of *Purvamimamsa* was discontinued in the same year, but from a later list of the books (furnished in the Appendix) it seems that it was revived in 1844, though with reduced importance.[79]

The discontinuance of the above subjects and professorial posts was due to more than any single reason. It was found that the study of these subjects was pursued not seriously because of the lack of interest on the part of the students and/or non-availability of capable teachers. It was also not unlikely that the fluctuating financial position of the College was also a cause for discontinuance of some teaching posts. Nevertheless, against all odds, two new departments, the *Samkhya* and the *Sahitya*, were introduced in 1820.[80]

NEW GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL POLICY: IMPACT ON THE COLLEGE

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the educational policy of the Government of India had become a burning topic, not only in this country, but also in Britain. Discussions and debates on this policy were held with enthusiasm and concern by the advocates of both the Oriental and the Occidental schools of education in India and Britain. Meanwhile, with its power and position in India secured, the British Government was gradually deviating from its earlier policy of strict neutrality in the socio-cultural matters of its Indian subjects and started freely expressing policy opinions without much regard to popular reaction.

It was increasingly felt by many among both Europeans and Indians that the diffusion of Western arts and sciences should be made available to Indians through a gradual process. Hence, a segment of people was strongly in favour of pouring the new wine of Western education into the old bottle of classical language, and it was mainly with this objective, but also that of cultivating Hindu literature,[81] that the foundation stone of Calcutta Sanskrit College was laid down in 1823.[82] This institution was counterpart to Benares Sanskrit College but on a larger scale. Within a few years, Medical and English classes were added to the curriculum of Calcutta Sanskrit College.[83] With the foundation of this college in Calcutta, the British capital of India, Benares Sanskrit College was

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deprived of the singular care and attention it had received from Government in the field of Sanskrit studies.

There were also some people, both in India and in Britain, who strongly advocated Western educational instruction only through the English language and vehemently criticized any expenditure by Government for the study of classical Eastern studies. It was during this time that in commenting on the appointment of a Superintendent for Benares Sanskrit College, a Bengali newspaper published in Calcutta sharply criticized the Government's expenditure for Sanskrit and Arabic institutions and the granting of scholarships to students of these institutions. It sarcastically commented that instead of making a vain attempt at appeasing the subjects by liberally accommodating few students of Arabic and Sanskrit studies in Government schools (for those studies would not die even if Government patronization were withdrawn), true relief to the burden of the people would be better served through tax relief.[84]

The Government then set up a General Committee of Public Instruction (GCPI) in 1823 to implement its educational policies. This Committee sternly criticized the plans of the Benares Hindu College (Sanskrit College) and Calcutta Mohammedan College (Madrasa College) as 'originally and fundamentally erroneous' as a result of which 'the Government bound themselves to teach a great deal of what was frivolous, not a little of what was purely mischievous, and a small remainder indeed in which utility was in any way concerned.'[85] The GCPI, it seems, wanted to bring Benares Sanskrit College on equal footing with Calcutta Sanskrit College. On several occasions it was reported to have proposed introducing an English and a Mathematical class and/or the teaching of Newtonian and Copernican systems of Astronomy at Benares College, but the Secretary of the College was opposed to any such innovation 'partly on the plea that it would draw the boys off from their Sanskrit studies, and partly, lest it should interfere with the religious prejudices of the professors.'[86]

The difference of opinion between the Orientalists and Anglicists finally culminated in the appearance of Lord Macaulay, a staunch advocate of Western education through English, on the scene. The controversy abruptly ended in favour of the Anglicists when Governor-General William Bentinck strongly backed Macaulay and accepted his views as official Government policy. It is interesting to note that though Macaulay,

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who was in favour of the abolition of Calcutta Sanskrit College (which of course did not materialize) did not object to Government maintenance of Benares Sanskrit College, though he opposed the granting of any stipends to students of the College. He suggested, in his own assertive and proud style, in the minutes of February, 1835, that :

> 'If we retain the Sanskrit College at Benares and the Mahometan College at Delhi, we do enough and much more than enough in my opinion, for the Eastern languages. If the Benares and Delhi Colleges be retained, I would at least recommend that no stipends shall be given to any students who may hereafter (seek admission) thither, but that the people shall be left to make their own choice between the rival systems of education without being bribed by us to learn what they have no desire to know.'[87]

Varanasi College managed to survive despite the Government's new educational policies, though the institution initially suffered. First, in accordance with the newly-evolved policy of less Government expenditure for Oriental learning, the number of scholarships offered to students was reduced considerably in 1835; secondly, donations by indigenous rich people decreased substantially in the 1830s,[88] perhaps because of this shift in Government interest from Eastern classics to Western arts and sciences.

DECREASE IN STUDENTS : NEW COLLEGE SITE

Captain Thorsbey became College Secretary after the demise of his predecessor Captain Fell in 1824[89] where he continued until 1833 when he was appointed the Agent to the Governor-General in Murshidabad.[90] George Nicholls was appointed Visitor of the College around this time.

The record shows that while enrolment grew in 1829 and 1831, the number of students fell into a steady decline from 1835. While 316 students were enrolled in 1831 and 1832, enrolment plummeted to a mere 59 students towards the end of 1845. Though it is not possible to find out all the factors contributing to this, one may reasonably speculate at least on some of them. The first factor was the reduction and abolition of stipends to students by the order of the Council on March 7, 1835. Consequently, enrolment for students not receiving any stipend fell to 94 in 1836 and 72 in 1837, as they had sought admission with expectations that they would qualify for monetary grants if and when scholarships would be available in future. Thus with stipends nearly withdrawn, some students who had come to Varanasi to study returned home, while others continued to live here. They had to spend their time in worshipping deities and trying to obtain alms for their subsistence, and, consequently, they

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could not attend classes regularly.[91] The second factor was the total abolition of Persian classes in 1838[92] in view of English being the court-language, the eight students reading Persian in 1836 were summarily dropped.[93] The third factor was the relocation of the College premises. The proposal for this move was first made in May 1821 by the Government, which, upon having completed the new Mint buildings, suggested that the old Mint building, if found suitable for the purpose, be transferred to the College Committee for College use.

The Committee at first opined that the premises of the Old Mint were most admirably suited for the College, but later revised this opinion, suggesting that until some repairs and alterations were made, the Old Mint was unfit for that purpose. They also stated that the pandits and pupils were perfectly satisfied where they were. The house presently occupied afforded more accommodation than the Old Mint would offer, and moreover, its centralized location was advantageous.

The matter was then dropped until it was revived by George Nicholls, the Visitor of the College, Headmaster of the English Seminary established in 1830, and also Secretary to the Local Committee of Public Instruction. He proposed in his report to the Local Committee of 1839 that a new building of a very plain construction, the cost of which would be defrayed from the accumulated savings of the College fund, should be erected for the Sanskrit College near the English School. By such an arrangement, Nicholls held that both the English and the Sanskrit institutions could be concentrated under the Local Committee making it easier for the Committee, as well as the heads of the Sanskrit College and English Seminary, to look into the matters of those institutions.[94] Secondly, the proposed building would also be available for the use of vernacular classes when Sanskrit students were absent.[95] Nicholls hoped that no reasonable objection on the part of the pandits or pupils should be raised at this change of site, for the previous building occupied by the College was a hired one with which but 'few associations' would be connected.[96]

Thomson, Secretary to the Government of the Northwestern Provinces, was also in favour of Nicholls' proposal. Accordingly, on May 1, 1844, the College, which now came to be known as the Sanskrit Department of the Benares College, was moved from its former site to a house situated at a short distance from the English Seminary, the other department of Benares College.

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It appears that this 'new' house for the Sanskrit College was not really of new construction. Moreover, the removal of Sanskrit College from a house near the centre of town to the one on the outskirts of the City, according to J. Muir, the first European Principal of the Benares College, was one of the factors that caused the number of Sanskrit students decline further from 78 to 42 at the end of 1844.[97]

APPOINTMENT OF MUIR, THE FIRST EUROPEAN PRINCIPAL

The appointment of J. Muir, a European, to the post of Principal instead of Superintendent, in 1844 was an important event in the history of the College. It marked a positive change in the administration of the institution in the long run, though Muir only served the College for a short period, from April 1844 to the end of December 1845, after which he resigned. During his short tenure he introduced many reforms, both in the internal administration and in the curriculum of the College. Muir issued circulars in Sanskrit in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and also to bring certain matters to the serious notice of the staff and students.

In circular, addressed to the teachers and students in the very first month of his appointment, Principal Muir detailed the duties of the teachers. He declared that teachers should give proper attention to discipline the students, enhance the students' knowledge, devise the best ways of teaching, and finally, take disciplinary measures against students without themselves becoming enraged.

Muir also insisted that students should engage themselves in the pursuit of different branches of knowledge and respectfully obey the teachers in consideration of the superiority of the latter in respect of age, knowledge and position. Moreover, they should wear clean dress, behave in a gentle way, observe rules of good conduct and strive for mutual welfare.

Muir issued another circular in poem on the duties of teachers and students in June 3, 1844. An English rendering of this poem in prose is as follows :[98]

> 'While teaching the students of good quality, learned teachers should devote themselves to enhancing the students' power of understanding books within a short time. They should also see that while preparing lessons the students should independently try to grasp the meaning of books. The teachers should intervene only when the students fail to understand the books. As the body does not develop without proper exercise, so also the intelligence of students does not develop unless

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it is properly cultivated. As a boat moves on water sometimes being tossed up and sometimes being thrust down, so also students should be prepared to apply their intelligence in explaining and penetrating into books despite difficulties.'

In his very first circular the new Principal reiterated the richness and uniqueness of Sanskrit language and literature and urged its cultivation. He also held that in view of India's special relation with Britain, the young students should learn the English language as well as the arts and science developed there.[99] He hoped that the students of this institution, which was situated in Kashi, the Capital of the Empire of Indian knowledge, should make special efforts in the cultivation of learning. Moreover, he cherished the desire that the number of students should increase and all necessary steps be taken for the gradual development of the institution.[100]

Muir noticed that the existing set-up of the institution tended to restrict the interests of students to one or two subjects. Hence, to extend this area of interest, on April 25, 1844, he stated that first- and second-year junior students should be reading *Vyakarana*, *Ganita* (Arithmetic) and *Kavya*, while third-year students should study *Smriti* and *Nyaya* in addition to the subjects read in their lower classes, and fourth-year students should study Vedanta, *Samkhya*, and other similar subjects.[101]

Muir also rearranged the study of Sanskrit Grammar in the following manner :

'*Laghukaumudi* and *Sanskritamala* should be read for half a year with Pandit Durgadatta and then *Siddhanta Kaumudi* with Pandit Devadatta for two years. Finally, *Manorama* and similar works and also *Mahabhashya* should be read with Pandit Narayan Shastri or with Pandit Kashinath Shastri.'[102]

The Principal insisted in a circular dated May 7, 1844, that the teachers and students of a given department obey the orders of its head teacher. This definitely helped to maintain discipline in the various departments as well as in the College. It was decided further that the students would first read with the departmental teachers and finally with the departmental head. With a view to instilling seriousness in both the teachers and the students, each teacher was to take a student roll of each class and to take no recess between any two sessions. Detailed time-tables showing the allotment of classes to different teachers in different periods with time-limits were suggested by the Principal in the same circular.[103] Further, it was warned that if any teacher was found reluctant or opposed to the implementation of the Principal's orders, he, in consequence, would incur the latter's utter displeasure.[104]

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LIST OF BOOKS AND THE SYLLABUS

Fortunately, we have found a detailed list of books (placed in the Appendix) used in the different classes of the College just before the appointment of Muir, who seems to have maintained the status quo in this regard with but few changes. This list helps us to form a clear idea about one of the most important aspects of the study of this institution, the types of textbooks followed. With all probability the textbooks read at Benares Sanskrit College were, more or less, followed at other private seminaries of Varanasi. It also appears that study courses for the various subjects were quite exhaustive, and even a moderate grasping of the subject matter therein demanded a lot of labour and attention on the part of students.

INTRODUCTION OF TWO COURSES FOR SCHOLARSHIP-HOLDERS

Muir introduced two courses for two categories of scholarship-holders, first for those who would seek a scholarship of 8 rupees per month and second for those who would seek scholarships exceeding Rs. 8. It was but natural that more books were recommended for those who would seek monthly scholarships exceeding Rs. 8 and this was a higher course in comparison with the former. Syllabi for both categories of students are recorded below.[105]

SYLLABUS FOR FIRST CATEGORY STUDENTS

1. Proficiency in *Kosha* and *Vyakarana* is required.
2. The works like *Kumarasambhabam*, *Raghuvamsham*, *Mrichchhakatikam*, *Chandralokam*, etc., should be read. Proficiency in explaining these works critically is required.
3. The works like *Nutanadantotsava*, *Itihasatamomani* should be read. The students should be able to answer questions from those works without consulting them.
4. The students should also have the capacity to answer questions from the works written by the Principal (Muir) on the history and character of the Europeans.
5. The students should have the capacity to translate passages from Sanskrit to the commonly used language (Hindi?) and also vice-versa.
6. The whole of *Vyaktaganitam* and the first chapter of *Rekhaganitam* should be learnt perfectly.

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SYLLABUS FOR SECOND CATEGORY STUDENTS

1. Same as (1) of first category.

2. Selected chapters of the *kavyas* of Magha and Naishadha and the dramas entitled *Mudrarakshasam*, *Malatimadhavam* and *Kuvalayanandam* should be read; skills to explain these works critically should be acquired.

3. Special study of one of the following branches of learning, Vedanta, *Samkhya*, *Smriti* and *Nyaya* should be made. But everyone must study the fundamentals of *Nyaya*.

4. Same as (3) of first category.

5. Same as (4) of first category.

6. Same as (5) of first category.

7. The first six chapters of the *Vijaganitam* (Algebra) and *Rekhaganitam* and some of the axioms of the *Trikonomiti* (Trigonometry) should be learnt properly. Such students should also learn how to answer questions on new topics in Sanskrit elaborately and also according to their own intelligence.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF MUIR

It is evident from these lists of books that the idea of imparting a modern education, though gradually introduced through the medium of Sanskrit in both traditional and Western models at Calcutta Sanskrit College, was now in place at Benares Sanskrit College as well, despite having once been flatly opposed by Captain Fell, its former Secretary. For example, *Nutanadantotsava*, which contained a description of England, was now included in the syllabus of Benares College; again, *Rekhaganitam*, once rejected for the pupils of this College, was reintroduced.[106] Nevertheless, there was general apathy among students of the College to learn Western sciences,[107] Muir took initiatives to remove this from the minds of the young learners.

Along with the culture of Sanskrit, the culture of *Samanya Bhasha*, Hindi, to a certain degree, had been gaining ground at the College even before the advent of Muir. This is evident from the fact that the students were required to translate Sanskrit passages into Hindi. But the performance of the students must have been far from satisfactory in this respect and presumably that was why Muir had to reemphasize and justify the study of Hindi *vis-à-vis* the study of Sanskrit in a circular of June 19, 1844.[108]

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Muir also introduced the system of formal distribution of certificates in Sanskrit to students, duly signed by the Principal and professors in 1844. Another certificate, in English, bore the signatures of the Principal and members of the Managing Committee as well.[109] A specimen of the certificate written in Sanskrit, distributed on July 3, 1844, is given in the footnote below.* An English translation follows :[110]

May this educational institution founded by the all powerful Honourable (East India) Company in Kashi fare well: The student, ..., has studied here for twelve years and has been examined namely; in the first grade he studied *Vyakarana* along with commentaries in *Manorama*, *Mahabhashya* etc. with Pandit Vitthala Shastri for six years; then he studied the *Nyaya* starting from *Muktavali* up to the *Byabhichara* portion of the *Gadadhari* Commentary with Pandit Krishna Charan Tarkabhushan for four years; then he studied the Vedanta starting from the *Panchadashi* to the *Shariraka Bhashya* with Pandit Umarao for two years; on being satisfied with suitable performance in examinations which have been given from time to time, the authority has awarded completion; then with a view to perfecting his knowledge he has studied *Samkhya* with Pandit Hirananda and also studied *Sahitya* and *Dharmashastras* with the Pandits of the institution; and thus has become an erudite scholar in Sanskrit.

This certificate is hereby issued to the scholar by the undersigned learned Professors to the effect that the scholar is now fit for a suitable employment.

Samvat 1901
July 3, 1844 AD
Unanimously certified by:
Pandit Umarao Sukul

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* "स्वस्ति० भूमण्डलाखण्डलकम्पनीशप्रवर्तिताधीतिगृहेधिकाशि। समा दश हे त्र्यपठत् परीक्षापूर्वं महानन्दबुधो विदेशी ॥१॥ तथा हि—प्रथमसोपानस्थव्याकरणाध्यापकपण्डितश्रीविहलशास्तितो मनोरमादिमहाभाष्यान्तं व्याकरणं यावत् षड् वर्षं समाप्य, तदनन्तरमावर्षचतुष्टयन्न्यायशास्त्रपण्डितेभ्यः श्रीकृष्णाचरणतर्कभूषणेभ्यो मुक्तावलीमारभ्य गादाधरीं सव्यभिचारान्ताम्पठित्वा, वेदान्तशास्त्राध्यापकपं० श्रीमदुमारावपण्डितात्पञ्चदशीमारभ्य शारीरकभाष्यावसानं वर्षद्वयेन पठित्वा, मध्ये मध्ये समीचीनपरीक्षादानेन संतुष्टचेतोभ्यः प्रभुभ्यो लब्धदक्षिणः, स्वोपयुक्तसाङ्ख्यं श्रीहीरानन्दपण्डितादधीत्य, साहित्यधर्मशास्त्राणि पाठशालास्थपण्डितेभ्योऽधीत्य पाण्डित्यङ्गतः कार्याधिकारार्हश्चेत्यर्थसंसूचकपत्रमेतद् वितीर्णमस्मै विबुधप्रधानैस्तदध्यापकैः। शुभम्।

संवत् १९०१ श्रावणकृष्णातृतीयाश्लिष्टबुधेऽयं लेखस्समजनि सन् १८४४ माह जुलाई तारीख ३
सममान्ययमर्थः सुकुलोपाह्वोमारावशर्मपण्डितैः
चतुर्वेदहीरानन्दशर्मपण्डितसम्मतम्
सम्मतोऽयमर्थः श्रीकृष्णाचरणशर्मणः
सम्मतिरेतदर्थे नारायणशास्त्रिणाम्
स ज्ञयत्र काशीनाथशास्त्री
श्री गुलजारशर्मपण्डितः"

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Pandit Chaturveda Hirananda
Pandit Srikrishna Charan Sharma
Pandit Narayan Shastri.

Thus during his short stay, Muir went to great pains to improve the academic standards of the College. While doing this, he introduced some systems of educational institutions of the West, which were, of course, by this time, somewhat familiar in India. We do not know, however, how the pandits and students reacted to Muir's circulars, nor how effective his measures were in producing the desired results. Again, it is not known why Muir resigned from his post after such a short period of service.[111] Was it owing to personal reasons ? Was he not getting on well with colleagues, students and/or the College Committee ? Though we do not have these answers, it is evident that Muir paved the way for one of his great successors, Dr J. R. Ballantyne, an illustrious Sanskrit scholar, to follow in his footsteps with even greater success.

REVEREND WALLIS, THE SECOND PRINCIPAL

Muir's immediate successor was Reverend Wallis who continued in the post for about a year. Nothing remarkable was reported to have taken place during his tenure, perhaps owing to the fact that he did not know Sanskrit.[112] Furthermore, as a Christian Missionary, he probably felt some difficulty in establishing cordial relations with the orthodox Hindu staff of the College and may have been at odds with portions of the syllabus.

THE ARRIVAL OF PRINCIPAL DR J. R. BALLANTYNE : A NEW PHASE

Dr J. R. Ballantyne, the third European Principal of the College, served the institution for a fairly long period of fifteen years from 1846 to 1861. His term was marked by various circumstances that contributed to the wide popularity and celebrity of the College. Ballantyne's profound knowledge of Sanskrit and English, his original thoughts and ideas, uncommon ability and practical sense, and finally, his tenacity and devotion to the task made him a renowned scholar, a successful teacher and an efficient administrator. He also mobilized a galaxy of scholars for the teaching staff. All these helped in creating an ideal academic atmosphere and made attending the College worthwhile and consequential. The identification of this foreign Principal with this institution was so profound that his memory has become inseparably associated with the history of the Benares Sanskrit College just as Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's memory is inseparably associated with the Calcutta Sanskrit College.

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TEACHING OF HINDI AND URDU

In spite of Muir's initiatives, the students' standard of knowledge of Hindi hardly improved. Their carelessness in this regard was strongly criticized by Ballantyne as a gross failure. This delinquency on the part of the students was also possibly due to a critical attitude toward Hindi held by local pandits, one similar to that of the Bengalee pandits to Bengali. To be explicit, the pandits were of the opinion that any literary ventures into vernaculars like Hindi and Bengali were both degrading and impossible. Again, besides the knowledge of vernaculars to be acquired at home and primary schools, there was nothing at that time in the educational system to develop such knowledge. So far as Sanskrit College was concerned, when the Persian class was abolished in 1836, a Hindusthani class was introduced in its place. It appears that this new arrangement was not availed of as had been expected.[113] Ballantyne initiated Hindi instruction for students reading in the 'Tisri Class' (Third Grade) and he himself started issuing circulars in Hindi to emphasize the importance of this vernacular in the transaction of day-to-day business.[114] Ballantyne was also eager to arouse the interest of students in Urdu and his proposal in this regard was also accepted by the Government.[115]

Ballantyne also observed that students were not proficient in writing. Again, the students alone could not be blamed for this deficiency which probably originated in the traditional system of learning through rote due to a scarcity of writing materials in the earlier days. Ballantyne instructed students not to belittle the habit of writing or to hold it as something degrading. He explained to them in detail the intimate relation between reading and writing, and also the importance of good writing, and asked the students to put emphasis equally on reading and writing. Thus Ballantyne wanted to replace the traditional system of learning through rote by a system of learning through both rote and writing.[116]

ANGLO SANSKRIT DEPARTMENT

It has been already hinted that the idea of infusing a Western education along with Sanskrit learning did not gain much ground among the students. Yet, Ballantyne was able to change the attitude of the students and instilled in them a desire to acquire Western knowledge. The Anglo-Sanskrit Department was established from 1847-48 with due permission from the Government. The Department, intended for those students of higher classes interested in learning English and getting a Western

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education, was called '*Arvachinah Pragatishilashchabibhagah*' meaning Modern Progressive Department of the College.

Not only was this Department expected to enrich one's knowledge of Sanskrit by Western learning, but there was also the higher objective of bringing scholars of Eastern and Western learning together on the same platform, paving the way for mutual impact. English Literature, Western Philosophy, Psychology and Physics comprised the syllabus. The Head of this Department was appointed at the lucrative scale of Rs.500-100-700 per month. Celebrated scholars like Dr Fitzedward Hall, an American*, who later on became the Professor of Sanskrit, Hindustani and Indian Jurisprudence at King's College and Librarian of the India Office, London, and Dr Kern, who also became Professor of Sanskrit in Leyden University, were appointed to this Anglo-Sanskrit Department.[117] Above all, Ballantyne, who had translated many Sanskrit works into English and was the author of *A Synopsis of Science*, originally written in English and then rendered into Sanskrit, and also synopses of the works of Bishop George Berkeley, Francis Bacon, John Stuart Mill,etc., was himself a source of inspiration to the members of this Department. Bitthal Shastri, a student here, translated the first and second parts of Bacon's *Novum Organum*.

We get a glimpse of the activities of this Department from the Report of Public Instruction in the Agra Presidency for the year 1854-55. From the pieces of information furnished by the Departmental Head, F. Hall, and included in the report, we come to know that in the course of 1854, students read thirty-six selected numbers of the *Spectator*, the whole of Whateley's *Logic* and eighty-two pages of Whateley's *Rhetoric*; that several of the students had employed their leisure in preparing translations from English, which might prove serviceable as schoolbooks; that the rest were also ready to engage in translation; and that Pandit Shital Prasad Tewary had prepared, under Hall's supervision, a highly creditable Hindi version of the first volume of Ballantyne's *Sanskrit Synopsis of Science*. Hall also complained of the difficulty of obtaining proper English textbooks for the more advanced classes.[118]

It was from this Department that the illustrious Anglo-Sanskrit Magazine, *Pandit*, containing scholarly articles in both Sanskrit and English, was launched. Thus this Department helped in enhancing the reputation of the College and also justified its existence by fulfilling the objectives of its introduction.

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* For further details on Hall, see Chapter XII.

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THE NEW COLLEGE BUILDING : QUEEN'S COLLEGE

It was during Ballantyne's tenure that the two most remarkable incidents in the history of the institution took place. These were the construction of a new and magnificent stone structure of its own and its change of name from Benares College to Queen's College. The name change was made to commemorate Queen Victoria of England, the administrative head of British India.

The foundation stone of the new building was laid 'with Masonic honours' by Maharaja Ishwarinarain, the Raja of Benares, and R. Neave, Deputy Provincial Grand Master of the Masonic Body in the North Western Provinces.[119] Major R. E. Kittoe, Government Archaeologist, designed and built the structure between 1848-52, which was described as 'a gem in building'.[120] It was a noble Gothic structure of the perpendicular style faced with Chunar free-stone. The centre tower was seventy-five feet high; the nave, sixty feet long and thirty feet high. At each corner were small towers, connected by open arcades. Attached to the building were houses for the Principal, etc. and a pleasant garden.[121] The total cost of construction was £12,690 (Rs 152348-2-5).[122] Some generous persons of the City, for example, Babu Deonarayan Singh and a few Europeans, whose names were recorded on portions of the structure designated as their special gifts, contributed in defraying the heavy cost of construction.

It is reported that 'the Architect laboured under many disadvantages, particularly that of adapting a style of architecture fitted for a cold climate, to one not celebrated for that peculiarity, not to mention the necessity of being his own builder, engineer, stone mason, glazier, stainer of glass, and general superintendence.'[123] An elegant gateway entrance to the College was built and Babu Rajendra Mitra, a local Bengalee *rais*, contributed a handsome donation towards its construction.[124] The completed building impressed onlookers with its imposing structure and some regarded it as 'the most imposing building yet erected by the British in India.'[125] Bholanauth Chunder, an elite Bengalee, who visited the new College Building within a few years of its construction, was so impressed by the novelty of the structure that he held it was 'really the worthiest object of all to see in Benares.'[126]

BALLANTYNE'S ACHIEVEMENT

Ballantyne, who was also an ardent Christian, perhaps had a latent desire to mould students of the college with Christian views. Such

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motives, if he had them at all, would not have inspired his colleagues or students and did not come to fruition.

Ballantyne's contribution to the transformation of the College into a purposeful institution by motivating both staff and students and also by broadening its scope introducing the Anglo-Sanskrit Department, were certainly his most remarkable achievements. His spirit, as it were, continued working even after he left the College and the legacy bequeathed by him was successfully borne by worthy successors. Consequently, the number of students started increasing considerably and the total student strength of Benares College, henceforth called Queen's College, now consisting of both Sanskrit and English sections, was around seven hundred in 1868.[127]

So far we have given a brief account of the institution and discussed some of the relevant points in detail. Let us now take up some other aspects of the College to supplement this discussion.

THE MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

One of the major objectives of this institution was to purchase and preserve manuscripts, which might otherwise have been damaged or lost. Jonathan Duncan proposed on October 19, 1792, that the surplus in the Moolkey Treasury for 1198 (*Fussly* year) should be reserved for the purchase of books or other extraordinary disbursements for the good of the College.[128] The "books" mentioned here could only mean manuscripts, since printed books in Devanagari characters were not available at that time. Towards the end of 1800, most probably a separate room had been fixed for housing a library. But nothing is known about the number of complete manuscripts here save one piece of information regarding Pandit Kashinath, the sacked first Principal, alleging that he had still possessed '33 complete books, besides 2,508 leaves belonging to other books.'[129]

From a list of 'books' submitted to the College Committee, it appears that during the period from April 1809 to April 1813, 7,865 leaves of *punthis* (manuscripts) had been examined, compared and revised by the pandits of the College.[130] But it was soon discovered that the scrutiny of these leaves by pandits had been interfering with their other duties, especially teaching. Hence, it was decided that a learned pandit, not assigned to any teaching duties, should be appointed as Librarian to 'assort, comprise, and revise the books, at a salary of Rs 100 per mensem with two assistants at Rs 50 each.'[131]

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Accordingly, Pandit Mathuranath was appointed the first Librarian of the College in 1813 and was authorized to choose for the approbation of the Committee of two persons as his assistants. Shortly afterwards, in view of the incompleteness of the library, the Librarian and the Rector were requested by the Committee to purchase transcripts of such books as were needed in the classes.[132] After the passing away of Mathuranath, it was resolved on December 14, 1818, that library matters should be looked after by Pandit Ramananda, the Rector himself.[133] In 1820, the Committee proposed the abolition of the post of Librarian and created the post of a Library Assistant at a salary of Rs.50 per month to preserve the books and two vacancies for the post of Corrector, a position not requiring very sound knowledge of Sanskrit, at the monthly salary of Rs.25 each.[134]

It should also be put on record that a Venkat Acharya Trust had subscribed money for purchasing books, etc., for the College Library in 1849.[135]

This Library, attached to the College was, however, neither the first nor the only of its kind in Varanasi, for there were already a good number of private Sanskrit collections, referred to in Rev. William Tennant's 1798 account of the City.[136] When Wilkins, Wilford, and other Europeans lived in Varanasi to study Sanskrit, they explored libraries owned by monasteries, temples, pandits, aristocrats, chiefs and others.[137] The major difference between these libraries and the Sanskrit College Library was that while the former were in private collections, the latter belonged to a public institution.

THE COLLEGE MUSEUM

There was also a Museum attached to the institution to supplement and widen the range of classroom studies. Babu Rajendra Mitra, already referred to, made again a useful and handsome donation to the College Museum in 1853.[138] The Museum contained the relics of Hindoo pottery of the tenth and eleventh centuries[139] and the attractive curios were reported to have been both entertaining and instructive.

THE PROBLEM OF BOARD AND LODGING

The College had no board or lodging facilities even for the outstation students, who would flock to the City from different parts of the country to study here. Some students were however fortunate enough to be accommodated by relatives, living in and around the City.

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There were other students who were utterly helpless, receiving neither a stipend from the College nor having any other means of support. Such students were obliged to subsist by begging from an almshouse or on the credit allowed them by *beniahs*[140] (money-lenders) to be repaid after the former hopefully received a stipend. To beg food was also sometimes difficult as the hours of the almshouses would coincide with those of the College. Having no fixed place of residence they would sleep at any place they could find, presumably at ghats along the Ganga or in open courtyards or verandas. The situation became worse for them when the institution changed sites in 1844 from the heart of the City, where usually almshouses were located, to the outskirts.

EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED STUDENTS

Upon successful completion of courses, students were employed in Court-Pandit posts or as Hindu Assistants to European judges. For example, in 1795, Kashinath Siddhanta, was appointed in the Diwani Adalat at Shahabad in the Upper Provinces, another former student to the Zilla Court at Rangpur, Bengal in 1802, and two others there again in 1807 and 1809.[141] The Board of Control also gave assurances that students of Benares College, having qualified themselves for that office, would be appointed to the post of Law Officer whenever such opportunities might occur. But this did not always happen. When the post of Pandit in Dewany Adalat at Hooghly fell vacant, it was filled by a pandit other than Nilambar Tarkavagish Bhattacharya, a qualified student of Benares College.[142] This employment was further limited when digests of Hindu laws were edited and translated into English, published and made available to the European Judges for consultation.

But a new field of employment in the law courts opened under the following circumstances. During Muslim rule in India, suitors had pleaded their own cases in court and this practice continued until 1793, when qualified Indian advocates were regularly employed. These advocates were often chosen from students of Calcutta Madrasa for Muslim cases and from Benares College for Hindu cases; and rules for fees were fixed by public regulations. This system insured suitors against negligence or misconduct of either the European Judges or Indian assistants and these advocates were often as conversant in court business as either of these officers.[143] Presumably, the foundation of the Calcutta Sanskrit College in 1823 made the positions of Court-Pandits and

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Advocates even more competitive for students of the Benares College. The Government's sudden shift of emphasis from classical studies to English studies must have had a negative effect on the Sanskrit students' employment in general as well.

Consequently, students from Sanskrit College frequently had to face the problem of unemployment. Certificates of Distinction issued by the College, of course, helped to get preference in employment,[144] but there were not enough posts to absorb them. Nevertheless, it seems that the difficulty of getting into Government service forced the bulk of them into other employment alternatives, the most important of which was self-employment. They opened *tols* (*pathashalas*) in Varanasi and elsewhere, issued *Vyavasthas*, or learned opinions on socio-religious issues, performed *Yajnas* and other ritualistic worships, held discourses on scriptures and similar things to earn a livelihood. Presumably, in the matter of such employment, the students of the College enjoyed a special privilege on account of their association with Varanasi in addition to their being qualified by a Government institution as already hinted.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE COLLEGE

The regular and systematic cultivation of classical Sanskrit through teaching and learning in the College; the further diffusion of this learning by qualified students; the assistance provided in the administration of justice as court-pandits and advocates; the issuing of *Vyavasthas*; and, finally, the preservation and later publication of manuscripts by the College were all significant contributions of the College and its alumni to various sectors of public life. The College also played a vital role in introducing a Western educational institution, substituting specialization with generalization as well as specialization with regard to studies, and lastly, introducing Western education along with Sanskrit learning through its Anglo-Sanskrit Department.

Benares Sanskrit College, in its long and arduous journey from 1791 onwards, brought about significant changes in the field of traditional learning with regard to the environment of teaching, the methods of teaching and also, to some extent, the content of teaching, thus paving the way for a full-fledged university which came into being around the middle of the twentieth century from the nucleus of this institution.

THE JAYNARAYAN SCHOOL

Though Sanskrit College of Varanasi was founded on rather modern

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lines, a truly modern education was beyond its scope, its prime concern being Sanskrit education. There was, however, a growing demand among some Indians as well as the Europeans for imparting Western Education through English and this demand gained further momentum on the occasion of the confrontation between Orientalists and Anglicists to which we have already referred.

Originally, it was this idea of imparting a modern education to the people that led to the foundation of the Jaynarayan School in Varanasi in 1814 and the Hindu School in Calcutta in 1817. There was, of course, one major difference between these two institutions. While the Hindu School was the result of a collective initiative of the Bengalee gentry and elites of Calcutta, the Jaynarayan School was the sole result of the initiative of Jayanarayan Ghoshal, also belonging to the Bengalee elites of Calcutta, who later migrated to Varanasi. Establishment of such a school in Varanasi, a city full of traditional academies of classical learning, had a special import. In spite of occasional criticisms directed against the school, it slowly found its footing stable and was to become the pioneer among similar types of academies of modern education, not only in Varanasi but in the whole of the province.

ORIGIN OF THE SCHOOL

From a highly informative letter written by Jayanarayan himself to the Committee of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) on August 12, 1818, we have come to know about the circumstances leading to the foundation of this institution, about Jayanarayan's management proposal to the Committee from the institution's earliest state, and above all, about Jayanarayan's association with it, including his role in its foundation. The letter reads as follows :[145]

> It is now many years since I fell very ill, (and) leaving Calcutta came to reside at Benares, where I used every possible means known to Hindus in order to get well. Mr. Jonathan Duncan, who was at that time Resident at Benares and was my particular friend, procured for me also the assistance of several European surgeons, who were not able to afford me relief.
>
> At length a Hindu, who had been very ill, procured some medical advice from a merchant, Mr. G. Wheatly, by which he obtained a cure. On this I also sought acquaintance with Wheatly. He gave me a (a copy of the) 'New Testament' and I bought of him a 'Book of Prayer'. He often passed much time with me, in explaining the meaning of these books and wrote many letters also to me on the subject of the Christian religion. In respect of my complaint, he recommended some simple

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medicines, but advised above all, that I should apply myself to God in prayer, to lead my mind into the truth, and to grant me bodily healing.

I complied with his advice and obtained a perfect cure. I then asked him what I should do for the name of Jesus Christ. He advised that as I had felt the benefit of the advice which he had given, I ought to consult (think of) the benefit of my countrymen and with this view (in mind) to found a school for education in English, Bengali, Persian and Hindi. In compliance with Mr. Wheatley's advice, I set about establishing such a school and with the help of my friend raised a fund to supply 200 rupees a month for the endowment of it. Afterwards, Mr. Wheatly, failing in business, became himself the first schoolmaster. Mr. Wheatly's method was first to instruct my family in Christianity and pray with them and then teach the English language to the Scholars (students) who attended. He continually taught me that from (by) joining in prayer and reading the (Christian) scriptures no loss of caste was involved, but piety would be increased.

After a short time, Mr. Wheatly died, and since then I have had much trouble to accomplish my wishes respecting this school. In 1814 when Lord Moira came up the country, I applied through Mr. Shakespear, to his Lordship for assistance. His Lordship approved of the design and left the settlement of it to his agent at Benares, Mr. W. A. Brooke. Mr. Brooke told me that when all disputes respecting the settlement of the estate I intended to endow the school with, were ended, he would report my wishes to the Governor-General, but until now these differences have not been adjusted.

I became very anxious for the settlement of my school. Several masters I had employed proved unsuitable and the children who came to school received no profit. I had heard through Mr. Wheatly of the Rev. Mr. Corrie, and through him had sent in 180 rupees, a small donation, with a letter to the British and Foreign Bible Society. I often prayed that he might come to Benares, and at length he came to reside at this place. From the information communicated by him, respecting the Church Missionary Society, and from a perusal of one of that Society's Reports which he gave me, I determined upon making the Calcutta Committee of the Church Missionary Society, the trustees of my school, and assigning to them the property which I had appropriated for the endowment of it.

Accordingly, I have requested them to undertake the Trust and legal measures are in progress for transferring the school endowment permanently into their hands. In the meantime my house in Bangali Tolah, which cost me in building 48,000 rupees, has been appropriated for a school-home and Mr. Adlington has begun to give instructions in English tongue. Thus, what I have been many years desiring, begins to (get) accomplished. But I long greatly that the most effectual means may be used for enlightening the minds of my countrymen. I am, therefore, anxious to have a printing press also established at Benares, by which schoolbooks might be printed and generally dispersed throughout the country. Without this, the progress of knowledge must be very slow and the Hindus long remain in their fallen state, which is a very painful consideration to a benevolent mind.

I, therefore, more earnestly request the honourable Church Missionary Committee to take measures for sending out a printing press at Benares, with one or

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two suitable missionaries to superintend it (and) men of learning, who may be able to satisfy the inquiries of the learned of this ancient City on subjects of science as well as of religion. The reception which the missionaries at Serampore and of the School Book Society in Calcutta meet with, shows how welcome to my countrymen such an establishment at Benares would be; and as the Church Missionary Society liberally expends its fund for the benefit of mankind, there is no place where their labours are likely to be more beneficial than at Benares and I earnestly hope they will not be backward to assist the efforts that (we) are making here.

August 12, 1818.

Jayanarayan Ghoshal

It is evident from this lengthy letter that it was Wheatley who induced Jayanarayan to open the institution, and again, it was Wheatley who became the first 'schoolmaster' of the institution. Jayanarayan was actively helped in founding the school by his son, Kalishankar, and a few other local people, who assisted him in raising funds. Jayanarayan's wisdom is evident in his additional proposal for setting up a printing press by the Committee of the CMS for the dissemination of knowledge in Varanasi and throughout the country through the publication and supply of schoolbooks. This proposal was not accepted, however, but the main proposal for turning over his institution to the CMS was seriously considered by the Church authorities.

TRANSFER OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TO CMS

Consequently, the school was handed over to the CMS by a Deed of Gift dated October 31, 1818. Legalized by Kalishankar Ghoshal at the insistance of Jayanarayan, who was still living, a portion of the deed reads as follows :[146]

'I, Kalishankar Ghossaul dwelling in Bhukailas, near the City of Calcutta, son of Maharaja Jayanarayan Ghossaul, son of Kissen Chund Ghossaul, having in possession of a Home near Jungumbari in Bangali Tolah in the City of Benares the writing (?) of the said House also stands in my name. The said House I give in trust to G. Udny Esq. (?), J. W. Sherer Esq. (?), the Rev. Mr. Thomson, the Rev. Mr. Parson (?) and the Rev. Mr. Robertson, who are in the Calcutta Committee of the Church Missionary Society meeting in London and to their successors for the purpose of a school for instruction in all kinds of science and that in this school children of all castes may be instructed in English, Persian, Hindi and Bengali languages. The appointment of the masters and the repairs of the Building to be at the pleasure of the Committee ... etc.'

This deed suggests that it was the intention of the founder that the school should be kept free from all sectarianism, having no caste and creed

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restrictions in admitting students, that it would impart education free and that it would teach English along with other vernaculars.

Jayanarayan, as we know, founded the school with an idea of educating his fellow countrymen and at the same time, showing gratefulness to the physician who had cured him. On this point Kalishankar writes : 'My father and myself have never taken any merit to ourselves in this world for doing that (founding the school), which we have conceived will redound to our credit and advantage in the world to come.'[147]

But Kalishankar's statement that they did not desire any merit in this world for philanthropic work like founding the school was not, however, completely true. In the same letter he appealed to the President and the Members of the Committee of Instruction to forward his petition to the Government with a recommendation, that title (of Raja) given to his father by the Prince, may be conferred upon his family, 'not as grant from Delhi, but as a reward emanating from the British Government.'[148] Despite whatever ulterior motives may have been behind the founding of the school, there can be no doubt of Jayanarayan's genuine desire to educate Indians along modern lines.

Now, was Jayanarayan right in deciding to hand over management of his institution to the CMS, especially when he must have been aware that these missionaries would in all probability mould the minds of young students in favour of Christianity? Jayanarayan, with a background in Western education and having social intercourse with many Europeans had the open-mindedness to judge this issue from a different angle. He was evidently impressed by what he had heard and read about the commitment of the CMS and wanted the organization to be involved in his ailing school. In fact, Jayanarayan was keen to make his institution purposeful and to place it on a strong footing before his passing away. On this point, Jayanarayan proved to be quite right in handing over the school to the CMS, which ran the institution well and gave it a long lease of life. The school proved to be a pioneering institution in Varanasi, and for this as well, Jayanarayan Ghoshal's name has gone down to posterity.

The Ghoshals continued to make regular donations to the School and by virtue of being founders and donors they were also party to its management. But for all practical purposes, the school was a Missionary School in public eyes and the CMS enjoyed full authority in management matters.

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SCHOOL OBJECTIVES AND OTHER DETAILS : MANAGEMENT NOTICE

A notice issued by the Mission authority detailing school objectives was originally written in English and circulated in several languages on November 11, 1818. In this notice it was announced that instruction in this institution was designed mainly to educate and maintain poor students and also to enable students to earn livings. We are quoting below the entire notice, which throws light on important subjects such as the objectives of the institution, admission norms, code of conduct to be observed by the students, subjects of studies, etc. The notice also gives us a general idea of other early Christian missionary schools in India, which were managed more or less on the same line.

THE NOTICE

(1) In this school, four languages are taught, viz., English, Persian, Hindi, Bengali.

(2) For the purpose of affording instruction in these languages, an English master as Superintendent of the Institution is engaged with proper assistants and learned teachers in the other languages are also retained.

(3) It is intended to maintain as well as to educate a number of poor boys who are to be accommodated in the House as soon as proper arrangements can be made, and a daily allowance will be made to such poor boys till the lodgement is supplied to such extent as the funds may admit it.

(4) The benefits of the institution to be at the same time open to all who are desirous of availing themselves of them without regard to caste or country and for this purpose, teachers with papers, ink and pens will be provided gratis for all the scholars, it being left to the option of such parents as could afford to pay for their children's education to contribute at their pleasure to the general expenses of the school and thereby to extend the benefits of it further to the poor.

(5) The primary design of teaching the above languages being to enable industrious youths to obtain for themselves a comfortable livelihood, the first care will be to instruct the scholars in reading and writing grammatically and in the most necessary rules of arithmetic together with the Government Regulation on the subject of Police and ordinary affairs. After which such youths as desire further improvement may be instructed in General History, Geography and Astronomy.

(6) No scholars to be admitted into the school under 7 years of age except such as are on foundation (Scholarship) nor any to be admitted to receive an assistance from the funds who are above 18 years. Each scholar to remain in school, if practicable for at least 2 years, but no scholar to receive pecuniary support beyond the period of 7 years nor above the age of 20 years unless for the pursuit of some study approved by the Managers.

(7) All the scholars are required to attend regularly everyday, to abstain from all improper language in school and to maintain a respectable moral character in society, without which no scholar can be admitted or if admitted be retained on his ill conduct being discovered.

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(8) The school to be open to all visitors every Tuesday and all contributors to the funds to be admitted to inspect the accounts on the second Tuesday of every month.

(9) It is being intended to form a Library and Museum also connected with the school as soon as practicable. Any donation of Natural Amnesties of Books in English or of the languages of India, especially grammar, Dictionary and Books of History will be thankfully received, and (a) book will be kept in which the names of Donors will be recorded with the nature and extent of donation.[149]

Bengali was also taught in this school because a sizeable Bengalee population was living in the City, especially where the school was established.

GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION AND GRANTS

It is known from Jayanarayan's letter that when Governor-General Lord Hastings visited the Upper Provinces in 1814, Jayanarayan applied to him for assistance for the establishment of the school. He proposed that Government would receive a deposit of the sum of Rs. 20,000, the legal interest of which together with the revenue arising from certain lands, could be appropriated to the expenses of the institution.

The Governor-General, as we have noted, approved Jayanarayan's noble plan subject to clearance from W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General in the City. Upon Government enquiry on the subject, Brooke wrote in reply that 'the Institution appears to me to deserve every encouragement' on account of the good likely to result from it to the people in that quarter because it was viewed by the people themselves with general approbation.[150]

The Governor-General, on March 6, 1819, approved the laudable objectives of the institution, and anticipating the benefits it was likely to produce, resolved to promote public encouragement of the undertaking by the Government. Accordingly, the Agent was authorized to grant on behalf of Government, a monthly sum of 252 rupees and 12 annas towards the expenses of the school, which, with the allowance of 200 rupees per mensem by Jayanarayan, seemed to be sufficient to defray the many expenditures to be provided for.[151] It is important to report here, that while the Government had appreciated the founding of the Hindu College in Calcutta, it did not provide any regular grant to it. Most probably Government's first lump sum and regular grants towards a modern educational institution were received by Jaynarayan School.

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The school was at first housed at the residence of Jayanarayan Ghoshal, which was a four-storied chunar-stone building situated in Bengali Tola. From old and rare records of the school we could form an idea of the actual condition of the institution in its early days.[152] These records contain, for example, the following statement of monthly expenditures for the school in 1818, throwing light on staff, students, maintenance costs, salaries, student scholarships and sundry expenses :

MONTHLY EXPENDITURE OF THE SCHOOL

Mr Adlington	Superintendent	Rs. 100
Mr Richards	1st Assistant	" 40
Mr Simon	2nd Assistant	" 10
Panchoo	English Monitor	" 3
Devee Dial (Dayal)	"	" 2
Bhow Pandit	Hindi Teacher	" 20
	Persian Teacher	" 10
	Hindu Assistant	" 7
	Bengali Teacher	" 8
	Bengali Assistant	" 5
	Dufteree	" 5
	Two *Durwans*	" 7
	Bhisti (water carrier)	" 3
	Sweeper	" 3
(Forty-two) poor boys received allowances at different rates amounting in all to :		" 94 - 4 anna
Police rate (tax) (monthly)		" 0 - 8 anna
Paper, ink, pens, inkstands, slates with books for every department at the lowest calculations (monthly)		" 20
Repairs of the premises with other contingent expenses to be provided for at the lowest calculation (monthly)		" 40
Sixty-four poor boys are in attendance daily without receiving subsistence but are so poor that without some provision they cannot study; hence the sum required for them :		" 75
		Total = Rs. 452-12-0[153]

The monthly expenditure shows a substantial difference in salary among the staff, such as between the Superintendent's 1st Assistant and

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the 2nd Assistant; again between the Hindi teacher and the Persian and Bengalee teachers. However, the pay-scale at Jaynarayan School was far lower than that at Sanskrit College, for the obvious reasons were that while the former was a Government institution and also an institute of higher learning, the latter was a private institution and just a primary and secondary level academy. It is strange though that there was no post of Headmaster or Principal in the institution as was the convention and it was the Superintendent who acted as the head of the institution. Monitors, presumably assigned to help teachers in maintaining discipline among students and in other allied matters, were also paid.

Moreover, as spelled out in the School Notice, every student of the school was to get, however meager, either a scholarship or other financial assistance. This was given as an incentive to the scholar and also to grant some relief to a large body of students generally coming from very poor families.

LIST OF CLASSES AND SCHOLARS

The first available list of classes and scholars is dated October 1818 and has been put in the Appendix.[154] It shows how that at first English was taught in three classes and Hindi, Persian and Bengali in one class each. The list also shows that the school succeeded in drawing a considerable number of students from different strata of the society soon after its inception. There were at least three factors responsible for this; first, there were no caste or creed restrictions; secondly, financial assistance was granted to all students in one form or another; thirdly, Persian, still the official language, and English, the language of the rulers, were part of the curriculum. The list shows further that there was a growing demand for English among local students as greater numbers were studying English than other languages. For example, while Persian, Bengali and Hindi were studied by 37, 17, and 10 students respectively, English was studied by as many as 42 students.

Other important features of the list are that while English was read mostly by Hindu students, Persian was read by both Hindu and Muslim students almost in equal number; for obvious reasons, Hindi was read by Hindusthani boys and Bengali by Bengalee boys.

The School Report of June 1, 1820, is even more revealing than that of 1818, since it mentions the castes of individual students and also describes the courses of study.[155] This year another English class was added bringing

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the total number of students studying English to 58, among whom 51 were Hindu and only two were Muslim. Five Christians were also admitted into the English class; three being Roman Catholic and one Protestant. Probably they were all Indian Christians, but the fifth Christian student named Peter, a student of the First class, was interestingly enough a Russian. Perhaps he was the son or near relative of Peter Federoff, the Russian who was residing in Varanasi and was close to Demetrius Galanos, the Greek scholar.[156] Among the 51 Hindu students of the English class, a vast majority of 38 were Brahmins, while there were 11 Kayasthas and 2 Khatris. Again among the Brahmins, Bengalees formed the majority with seventeen.

The School Report of April 1, 1823[157] supplies also important information. First, though it was not in the original Notice, Sanskrit was introduced this year with eleven students reading in this class. What was perhaps more remarkable was that girls were admitted for the first time with a Urdu class opened just for them. It seems that these female students, seven in number, were all Muslims, for Urdu was the Muslim vernacular of Upper India and Muslim names like Ecemamun, Nunheemun, Punavo, Nunhu, Reybun, and Begum are furnished in the 1824 Report. This year another Persian class was introduced and the total number of students reading in the two Persian classes totalled forty. Students reading in the Hindi class also increased to thirty-two. Thus, the total of 149 students were studying there in 1824. The fifth English class and the third Persian class were perhaps added to the school in 1824 and 1830 respectively.

These Reports from different years show a steady increase in the total number of students. In order of preference, English studies, followed by Persian, enjoyed greatest demand.

COURSES OF STUDY

The first available (June 1820) description of courses and books followed in different classes, shows that most teaching was confined to elementary reading and writing in all languages except in English.[158] Biblical studies were compulsory in all classes and in some classes it was comparatively exhaustive. In the Hindi and Bengali classes, however, Biblical studies formed the entire syllabus, showing how much emphasis was given to such studies by school authorities. It seems that the study of police and ordinary affairs, which had been promised in the Notice, was not included in the syllabus.

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Consequently, the founder's original intention of imparting a modern education at this school was only realized by the students of English; a lack of qualified teachers and books were possible handicaps in providing such an education to students of the other languages.

Moreover, the inclusion of Biblical studies at this school was neither suggested in the Deed of Gift made by the founder nor was it mentioned in the Notice of the institution issued by the Missionaries. The inclusion of Christian scriptures in the syllabus, which was unwarranted, was clearly designed to impress Christian thought on these young minds while, directly or indirectly, implanting disrespect, if not indignation, for their own religious traditions. The teaching of Christian scripture would naturally give missionaries the opportunity to criticize and condemn the religions of the land and uphold the superiority of their own.

Different writing techniques were in use at the school, like writing on sand, palmyra leaf and paper. In all English classes, except the most basic one, education comprised knowledge of the 3 R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic); besides, in the 1st and 2nd English classes, an elementary knowledge of subjects like History and Geography was also disseminated. And while the syllabus of Geography comprised the geography of India, which was relevant to the students, the syllabus of History was not so relevant, as it comprised the history of England but not the history of India. Perhaps a want of suitable books at that time was again responsible for such an anomaly.

Examinations must have been given at the school, but no details are known. Prizes were distributed to students through a ceremony possibly after an informal examination.[159]

Rev. W. Fraser presented each of three students of the English Class a copy of *Murray's Spelling Book* on October 3, 1822. Rev. Mill presented three students of the 1st English Class with copies of *Murray's Grammar*, and a few students of the 2nd English Class with a few small books on October 13, 1822. On February 3, 1824, prizes were given to boys of the 1st English Class after an examination by 'several gentlemen and ladies in Secrole.' The awardees and prizes were: Tara Persud, Gay's *Fables*; Budreenat, *Robinson Crusoe*; Bhowanee Shankar, *English Readers*; Sonoo, *English Readers* by Murray. Perhaps on the same occasion one Ratteny, a European, donated a gold *mohur* (15 rupee coin) for distribution among students .

The School was known as Maharaja Jaynarayan Free School till 1845,

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when it became Maharaja Jaynarayan College and Free School[160] in consequence of adding on a college section to the School. But the academy was popularly known as 'Chhoti School' (Small School) perhaps because Sanskrit College was possibly called 'Baḍi School' (Big School). Meanwhile, the School moved from its previous site in Bengali Tola to its present site in Reuri Talao.[161] At this time the School section had 6 English classes, 3 Persian classes, and 2 Hindi classes; Applied Astronomy was also taught in the topmost class. The College section had 3 English classes, 2 Persian and Hindi classes, 3 Bengali classes and 1 Sanskrit class. Students of the College section had to pay tuition fees.[162]

ACCOUNTS OF THE SCHOOL BY BISHOP HEBER AND MRS MACKENZIE

We have two first hand accounts of the school left by Bishop Heber in 1824-25 and Mrs Colin Mackenzie in 1847. They were personally interested in the school because of their missionary connections. Heber visited within a decade of its founding[163] and gave the following description :

> 'The house (of the school) is a native dwelling containing on the ground floor several small low rooms, in which are the junior classes, and, above, one large and lofty hall supported by pillars, where the Persian and English classes meet, besides a small room for Library. The boys in the establishment are about 140 under the care of an English schoolmaster, assisted by a Persian Moonshee, and two Hindoostanee writing-masters, the whole under the inspection of a Catechist, Mr. Aldington, a clever young man, a candidate for Orders. The boys read Oordoo (Urdu) Persian and English before me extremely well and answered questions both in English and in Hindoostanee with great readiness. The English books they read were the New Testament and compendium of English history. They also displayed great proficiency in writing (Nagree, Persian and English); arithmetic, in which their multiplication table extended to 100 x 100; geography, and the use of the globes. To judge from their dress, they were mostly belonging to the middle class of life.
>
> Many, I think, the majority, had the Brahminical string. I asked the catechist, and Schoolmaster, if any of these boys or their parents objected to their reading the New Testament. They answered that they had never heard any objection made, nor had the least reason to believe that any was felt. The boys, they said, were very fond of the New Testament, and can answer for their understanding it.'

Heber gave some additional information in a letter[164] on the academic performance of the students :

> 'Besides a grammatical knowledge of the Hindoostanee language as well as Persian and Arabic, the senior boys could pass a good examination in English Grammar, in Hume's History of England, Joyce's Scientific Dialogues, the use of

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the globes, and the principal facts and moral precepts of the Gospel, most of them writing beautifully in the Persian, and very tolerably in the English character, and excelling most boys I have met within the accuracy and readiness of their arithmetic.'

Mrs Mackenzie visited the school in 1847, and though it is hard to accept some of her views, her account furnishes interesting information, including the striking enthusiam among the local people for modern education.[165]

'It (The Institution) has about 300 pupils, who learn Hindustani, Persian, Sanskrit, Bengali or English as they choose. We were first led round the school which is held in one large hall. In some of the classes I was astonished to see bearded men, fathers of families, as they told me. They were Brahmens who consider it honourable to continue always learning, even though "never able to come to the truth". The English class was then called forward and read the third chapter of John. My husband questioned them on it; they did not answer particularly well on doctrine, but when Mr. Sandberg examined them, they showed an excellent knowledge of the facts of the Bible, and found out passages to prove particular points, such as the divinity of our Lord, as well as any boy in England could have done.

They then answered very satisfactorily in Roman and English history, and in Mathematics; during which time I cross-examined Mr. Mackay (Head of the School) as to the method of teaching and its results. Until lately he was single-handed in the work. All the boys read the New Testament, and religious instruction is given to them almost entirely by word of mouth. Those boys who do not learn English are taught almost anything in the same manner, by short lectures, owing to the want of books in the native languages. The main defect in this school seems to be, that so small a number of the pupils learn English, in which language alone they could receive a thoroughly good education.

All the Persian and Muhammadan books contain fierce attacks on Christianity, either in the preface or volume itself; the Persian Scholars are therefore, the most inimical to Christianity, and are incapable of reading works of a different tendency, from their ignorance of the English. Mr. Sandberg gives lectures in Urdu, which I found to be identified with Hindustani ... on the first principles of Physical Science, which are attended by numbers of people in the neighbourhood; and all the boys have free access to the Library of English books....'

Both of these accounts substantiate most of the points already discussed about the school and testify to the satisfactory performances of its students in different subjects, especially Biblical studies. The interest of the local people in lectures on Physical Sciences as developed in the West was a novel revelation. Both Rev. Heber and Mrs Mackenzie mention the existence of a library, but made no reference to any school museum, and though the school's original planning included a museum, it would appear that one had not actually come into being.

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In 1854, a new school building was erected north of the old school and was named after Thomson, the Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces.[166] Though the cost for construction of this building is not known to us, we at least know from the records that Rs. 12, 754 were raised in subscription from the local people for the building and an additional sum of Rs. 3,000 was claimed from the Government for the same purpose. Among the missionaries offering their services to Jaynarayan School, were Rev. William Smith, Rev. C. B. Leupolt, Rev. B. Davies, Rev. E. H. M. Waler, Rev. D. P. Hill and others. It has been reported that it was during D. P. Hill's tenure that the school hostel was constructed and the school made all-round progress.[167]

While forwarding a petition from the Secretary of the Jaynarayan Free School to William Muir, Secretary to Government, North Western Provinces, Steward Reid, Director of Public Instruction, remarked with high recommendations that 'I am aware that the Institution is one of very great importance.'[168] This shows that the Government was also cognizant of the importance of the school. The growing number of students, class attendance by adults, substantial subscriptions raised from the people for development of the institution and visits by distinguished persons to the school established beyond doubt that this institution was considered important and useful by both the local Indians and the Europeans and also by the Government.

OTHER MISSIONARY INSTITUTIONS[169]

The educational operations initiated by the missionaries of Jaynarayan School, were carried further and within a span of fifty years they opened many institutions in Varanasi for local children, including Indian Christian boys and girls, the details of which have been given in connection with missionary activities in Chapter VI.

Mrs Mackenzie visited the Orphan Schools for boys and girls, managed by the CMS in 1847. Her description gives an idea of the type of education imparted in these schools especially, and also in other schools run by missionaries in general when she writes :

'.... the boys (of the orphan school) did not answer very well, when questioned as to salvation by grace and not by works, but this might be partly from shyness and from imperfect use of English, for they seemed very intelligent and appeared to understand my husband's explanation. They answered well in geography; and in the schoolbook of one

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of the older pupils (*Chambers on Physical Science*), I found a neat little paper-book in which was the definition and sometimes the Hindustani translation of every difficult word in the part that he had read. They are taught carpet-making: all they earn is their own and as soon as they can support themselves they are allowed to marry.... We visited the carpet manufactory and the dyeing rooms. After breakfast and family prayers we went to see the girls' school. They were at work and do both plain work and knitting extremely well. The education consists of reading and working, religious instruction, and a little geography. This appears to be the prevalent system in most missions, except those of the Free Kirk.'[170]

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL

In view of a growing demand for English education among the people of Varanasi, an English seminary was opened by the Government on June 15, 1830, called the Benares Anglo-Indian Seminary. This name was retained till November 1836, when it became the Benares English Seminary or the Benares Government School.[171] Like the Sanskrit College, this seminary also had no caste restrictions. Gurucharan Mitra and Ishwar Chandra Dey,[172] who had been students of the Hindu College in Calcutta were appointed teachers at the school at the very outset. George Nicholls was appointed the Headmaster around 1836 and he continued in the post for some years.[173] A new building was erected for the English Seminary in Febuary 1837.

We have already seen that the Sanskrit College moved to a place near the English Seminary in 1844.[174] The Management of these two institutions was centralized when Muir was appointed Principal of both in 1844. But though these two institutions were officially regarded as the two departments of the Benares College under one Principal, they were, in fact, distinct from each other.[175]

The English Seminary, about which very little is known, was gaining popularity in the City and was attracting larger numbers of students. Rev. Sherring testifies to this development in the following words :

> 'At one time it was a hard matter to induce parents to send their sons to the Government and Mission schools, to receive a gratuitous education, now they are eager to send them and are also willing to pay the fees imposed in every such school.... The number of students in the English Department (of Benares College) has more than doubled of late years (in the 1860s)'.[176]

OTHER SCHOOLS

As the students of Hindu College took a leading role in establishing new schools in Calcutta,[177] though on a far smaller scale, the students of the English Seminary of Benares College took the lead in establishing schools in the City. The first move was taken by Shital Chandra Gupta, a

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senior scholar of Benares College, by founding a school in Khalispura Mahalla in Bengali Tola to teach English and Bengali in the 1850s, but the school closed down when he left.[178]

Keshab Chandra Mitra, another senior scholar of Benares College, in collaboration with others, laid the foundation for a small institution by the name of 'Primary English School' in a small, rented thatched house in Ramapura Mahalla in 1854 to teach both English and Bengali. The local Bengalee community chiefly patronized this school although it was intended to benefit students from all communities.

B. D. Verma in the *History of Our College* (Bengali Tola College) explains the background of the foundation of this institution in the following words :

> 'As the beginnings of modern education took shape first of all in that province (Bengal), as the Bengalees were the first to benefit from it, it was but natural for those of them, who reside in this City and who had shared the above advantage, to desire to make it available to the children of this City as well.'[179]

That leading people of communities other than the Bengalees, including a European, also lent their support to this school, is evident from the following list of Founders and Benefactors of the school: Maharaja Sri Gajapati Raj Bahadur, Benares, K. C. S. I. of Vizianagaram; Maharaja Ishwari Prasad Narayan Singh, G. C. S. I. of Benares; Babu Ananda Charan Dutta; Banamali Banerji; Bireshwar Mitra; Dr Girish Chandra Chatterji; Babu Indranarayan Sinha; Dr Jadunath Ghosh; Rai Kashinath Biswas Bahadur; Babu Keshab Chandra Mitra; Dr E. J. Lazarus, Medical Hall & Medical Hall Press; Raja Madholal, C. S. I.; Babu Nimai Charan Majumdar; Dr Purna Chandra Banerji; Babu Ramkali Chaudhuri; Swarup Chandra Maitra; Shitaram Keshoram; Shyama Charan Lahiri; and Umesh Chandra Sanyal.[180]

In the beginning, the number of students enrolled was only 12, but within ten years of the foundation of the Institution this number rose to 50, with four teachers.[181] Later, the house was found too small to accommodate the increasing number of students. At this time, Mahesh Chandra Sarkar, a renowned musician of the City and also one of the chief patrons during the early stage of the school, offered his own house at Madanpura, to which the school moved in 1856.[182] This Institution, the third-oldest, modern, public seminary in the City, was later upgraded to an Intermediate College in 1952 and came to be known as Bengali Tola Intermediate College and has been running well since.

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GIRLS' SCHOOLS AND FEMALE EDUCATION

Education for females was not unknown in India in the ancient age and references to highly educated women as early as in the Vedic period are not wanting. But later on, especially during the Mediaeval Age, the imparting of a formal education to women was uncommon. So far as Varanasi was concerned, there were few women in the City in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thoroughly conversant in the classical language of Sanskrit. The most glaring exception to this being Hati or Hatu Vidyalnkar whom we have already mentioned in the previous chapter.

Though some aristocratic families made private arrangements to provide an education (mostly elementary) for their daughters,[183] the general picture of female education in the City was far from satisfactory. In a word, education was considered unnecessary and even harmful for women as well as for society.

The Christian missionaries were pioneers in this field. They opened seminaries for girls and it was missionary authorities of the Jaynarayan School, primarily designed for boys, that opened the gates to girls in 1823.[184]

Mrs Mackenzie visited a school run exclusively for Christian orphan girls and left an account, already quoted, which throws light on what was generally taught in such schools.[185] Priscilla Chapman, in her *Hindu Female Education*, published in London in 1839, wrote that one Mrs Smith, was educating 68 girls in Varanasi.[186] Rev. Sherring recorded in the 1860s that besides the normal schools and orphan schools, meant exclusively for girls who had been converted or would be converted to Christianity, there were many other girls' schools run by the missionaries.[187]

In nineteenth century, when social reform movements were launched all over India on various issues including female education, and consequently, the value of female education was being recognized almost universally, presumably, the elite citizens of Varanasi also came forward and identified themselves with this movement. Quite possibly, Babu Shivaprasad, Joint Inspector of Schools, and others who were greatly enthusiastic about education in general, also devoted themselves to the spread of female education in Varanasi.[188]

SALIENT ASPECTS OF MISSIONARY INSTITUTIONS

There were certain differences in the courses of studies, internal

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management and the like, among the missionary schools in Varanasi. Some were run exclusively for Christian students and the rest for both Christian and non-Christian students. But everywhere certain outstanding features were common including the introduction of a Western educational infrastructure, imparting of an English education, Biblical studies and an emphasis on discipline and order. Two of these vital issues, discipline and Biblical studies are discussed below.

DISCIPLINE

We have already noted that the Notice of Jaynarayan School announced in very clear terms that the students of the School must maintain dignified and moral conduct, not only in the School, but also outside it as well. Students were also warned that if anyone failed to do so, he would be subject to expulsion from the School. It seems that this was not merely a warning as a matter of course, but care was taken to impose discipline scrupulously. To illustrate, the manner in which the students were presented before special visitors like Bishop Heber and Mr and Mrs Mackenzie for examination, suggests the high standard of discipline in the School. Not that discipline was enforced by the missionary authority of Jaynarayan School alone, it is quite likely that this was also the general modus operandi for other missionary and Government institutions as well.

Though we do not know the details of penal or corrective measures to discipline offenders, presumably the infliction of physical punishment was quite in vogue apropos of the practice of the day and, on certain occasions, excesses were committed in this regard. We know of at least one incident when a very young student of the English Seminary of the Government was caned so mercilessly by his Indian teacher, that blood oozed out from his skin. This incident was bitterly criticized by the local Press, which warned that unless such incidents were stopped, guardians would feel reluctant to send their wards to the school; moreover, Government achievements made in imparting education to the Indians so far would be totally ruined.

The use of corporal punishment exceeded all reason on another occasion in 1851, when Miss Mackay, a teacher and sister of Reverend Mackay, Head of Jaynarayan School, tortured a female student for negligence of studies so much so that the girl, daughter of one Gauranga Goswami, a Bengalee resident of Bhelupura Mahalla, finally succumbed to the beating. This incident, published in the news magazine,

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Kashivartaprakashika, must have aroused public opinion against Miss Mackay's inhumane conduct. Rev. Mackay was also suspected to have had some involvement in this affair, as both he and his sister were indicted and sent to the Supreme Court in Calcutta for trial. The case was decided against them and they were sentenced to transportation for life.[189]

BIBLICAL STUDIES

As far as the Biblical studies are concerned, it is difficult to ascertain how many among the students had genuine interest in the subject. There may have been some, no doubt, who were fond of the New Testament,[190] but the majority had an apparent theoretical interest only. Hence, Mrs Mackenzie observes :

> '...the first four boys in the English class (of the Jaynarayan school in 1847) profess themselves convinced of the truth of Christianity, so did the teachers of the Hindusthani class, the boys of which answered extremely well on a chapter in the New Testament, but *they go no further....*'[191]

There were also some students reading in the Christian schools who were suspected of duplicity in their fascination for Christianity and allegiance to Hinduism. This was illustrated when Bishop Heber writes :

> 'One of the boys in the Mission school, whose quickness had attracted my notice, and who appeared so well pleased with my praise that I found him still sticking close to me (when Heber was visiting the City), now came forward, showed his Brahminical string, and volunteered as Cicerone, telling us in tolerable English the history of the gods and goddesses on the walls. The fat pundit seemed pleased with his zeal, but it was well perhaps for the little urchin that the corpulent padre did not understand the language in which some of the remarks were made. They opened my eyes more fully to a danger which had before struck me as possible, that some of the boys brought up in our schools might grow up accomplished hypocrites playing the part of Christians with us, and with their own people of zealous followers of Brahma or else that they would settle down into a sort of compromise between the two creeds, allowing that Christianity was the best for us, but that idolatry was necessary in persons of their own nation.'[192]

This incident and its import had worried the Bishop so much that he talked with other missionaries, Fraser and Morris, on the subject and they answered that 'the same danger had been foreseen by Mr. Macleod (a missionary), and that in consequence of his representation they had left off teaching the boys the Creed and the Ten Commandments as not desiring to expose them too early to a conflict with themselves, their parents, and neighbours, but choosing rather that the light should break on them by degrees, and when they were better able to bear it.'[193]

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The missionaries, however, held that they had every reason to believe that all the bigger boys and many of the younger ones brought up at these Missionary schools, hence, also in Jaynarayan School, learned to despise idolatry and the Hindu faith less by any direct precept than by an indirect method. This was because, the missionaries claimed, their teachers never named the subject to them and in the Gospel, which was the only strictly religious book read, there were only allusions, if any, to Christianity alone. According to them, the dislike of the Hindu and Muslim students of their own faith grew from the disputations among them; from the comparison which they soon learnt to make between the systems of worship of their faiths and that of the Christians and, above all, 'from the enlargement of mind which general knowledge and the pure morality of the Gospel have a tendency to produce.'[194]

Heber records the following on the basis of the testimony and reports of the local missionaries :

> 'Many, both boys and girls, have asked for Baptism, but it had been always thought right to advise them to wait till they had their parent's leave, or were old enough to judge for themselves, and many have of their own accord, began daily to use the Lord's Prayer and to desist from showing any honour to the image. The parents seem extremely indifferent to their conduct in this respect.... The Mossulmans are more jealous, but few of their children come to our schools, and with them there are so many points of union that nothing taught there is at all calculated to offend them.'[195]

Though no person would be happier than a Christian Missionary at any single case of conversion, it seems from the above account from Heber that they were cautious regarding conversion of students and insisted on the permission of parents or their attaining maturity. They knew any uncalculated step in this regard would incur the displeasure of the people, especially of a city like Varanasi, which might ultimately defeat the very purpose of their mission here. Naturally, they had no other alternative than to have recourse to patience. But it is not that every Missionary waited patiently as was expected or claimed, which is evident from the following incident reported in 1851 by the *Kashivartaprakashika.*

Rev. Smith of the Jaynarayan School interned a boy called Gaurishankar, aged about 12 years, for the sake of conversion. The boy's maternal grandfather, who happened to be the guardian of the boy in consequence of the passing away of his parents, lodged a complaint with the Magistrate against Rev. Smith for said confinement of the boy. On

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being interrogated by the Magistrate, the boy also professed his faith in Christianity against Hinduism. The case, however, was held pending till the next hearing on June 7, 1851. On that day, after a detailed hearing from both the parties, Magistrate Tucker, ordered Rev. Smith to hand over the boy to his guardian on the plea of the minor age of the boy. But the case was not closed here, as the boy, who had returned to his grandfather, was again brought to court at the insistence of Rev. Smith. Once again Smith asked the boy whether he had been living happily with his grandfather to which the boy curtly retorted, 'What business do you have to ask me this question ?' 'You hypnotize the minds of the people by your magical power....' Even such a blunt reply from a mere boy could not deter Smith, who was reported to have induced him to appeal to the Session Judge against the judgement of the Magistrate. Finally, the matter came to a close in favour of Gaurishankar's guardian, when the Session Judge upheld the previous judgement of the Magistrate.

The *Kashivartaprakashika* reported two more incidents in 1851 in which two young students of the Jaynarayan School, one of whom was the only son of parents belonging to the Kayastha caste, were induced by the missionaries for conversion to Christianity. But it is not known what finally happened with them.

There is every probablity that similar incidents were not infrequent in the history of the missionary-run institutions. Some over-enthusiastic missionaries spared no pains to convert the students to Christianity. They did not succeed in their design because of various circumstances such as the strong denunciation of such acts by the people and the press, as *Kashivartaprakashika* had done; the overwhelming Hindu population of the City; the indecisiveness of the incumbents on account of their immaturity, as exemplified in the case of Gaurishankar; and finally, the legal problems in converting minor candidates. Mrs Mackenzie, who had visited the Jaynarayan School about two decades after Bishop Heber, reported that not even a single conversion had taken place in the college, though some who had been impressed with 'the Truth' they had heard there, had afterwards, in other places, professed themselves to be Christians.[196]

IMPACT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION

Though the students of the Hindu College of Calcutta comprised the first staff of the Government English Seminary of Benares, it is not known how much they themselves imbibed the spirit of the Young Bengal

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movement and instilled it in the students of the Seminary. But like their counterparts in Calcutta, some students of this City, being attracted by Western culture, committed certain acts that were regarded as detrimental to the socio-religious customs of the land. Local concern about this development was expressed in a Hindi couplet[197] presented below :

वेद मनु स्मृति पड़े न कोइ
ए बि सि पर ध्यान लागा,
कलिकाल कराल आपनको दिल मे
होटेल मे मास खान लागा।
आर्य सनातन धर्मको छोड़को
गिर्जाघर मे नर जान लागा।
सावस इंराज राजको
सवकोइ खृष्टान होने लागा॥

Nowadays no one studies the Vedas, Manusmriti, our scriptures;
People would rather concentrate on the ABCs
This is the terrible *Kali Yuga* (Iron Age)
They are going to hotels to eat meat
They have given up faith in the *Sanatana Dharma*
And have started visiting churches
Bravo to British rule !
Everyone is bent on becoming Christian.

However, the environment of Varanasi being different from Calcutta in many respects, such developments never rose to any alarming height.

On the basis of a long and close observation, Rev. M. A. Sherring, makes the following remarks on the impact of English education on local students :

'These institutions (Government and Mission colleges and schools) are yearly sending forth a large number of young men, well-trained and well-educated, who understand our English books, speak and write our language, take delight in European literature and civilization, and are generally, more or less, acquainted with the sacred scriptures. During their course of study, they have reflected upon the facts of history, or science, and of the Christian religion, that have been brought before their attention; and they have almost involuntarily, been led to compare them with the dogmas of their own religion, and with the practices, which it either permits, or enjoins.

The consequence of this course of instruction and reflection is, that, after spending several years as students, when they come to go forth to the business of the world, they find themselves very different, in thought and belief, from their friends

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and parents at home. A few of them ... of more courageous than the rest, whose hearts the grace of God has touched, honestly avow their disbelief in idolatry and belief in Christianity, and, in spite of all opposition, cast in their lot with the small but continually increasing body of native Christians. Others but how large a class I cannot say, abandon their idols, yet do not become Christians. Others, again ... a considerable number, I believe, worship idols reluctantly, from feelings of respect to their relations and acquaintances, and, if possible, solely on public occasions and at festivals. They are not yet ready to give up everything for their principles; they are not ready to sacrifice property, position, family, and friends, for what they have been brought to feel is the truth.'[198]

Though Sherring's observation is worth considering, he did not mention that there were also students, who in spite of receiving a Western education, kept genuine faith with the traditional religion and culture of the land.

INFUSION OF A 'NEW SPIRIT'

It is obvious that the proselytising design of the missionaries was not fulfilled through the educational institutions of Varanasi. They did, however, render valuable services in the field of education. No one should underestimate their pioneering role in the whole of India, including Varanasi, in imparting modern education. This education, in turn, induced Indians to rouse, as it were, from a degenerated state of slumber, to create in them an awareness of the world around them and to interact with it, and, finally, to imbue in them love for reasoning and a thirst for knowledge. Remarkably enough, both the Jaynarayan School (later College) and the English Seminary of the Benares College produced a galaxy of scholars like Ramkali Chaudhuri, judge; Mahendranath Ohadedar, physician; Shital Prasad Gupta, Headmaster and translator for Allahabad High Court; Shivaprasad Gupta, an educationist; Ramchandra Sen, Inspector of Schools and author of a number of works including *Essay on Human Life*, and others, who distinguished themselves in different walks of life by holding responsible posts in Government and playing crucial roles in social, educational and intellectual fields both within and without Varanasi.

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APPENDIX - I

Books and Syllabus of the Benares Sanskrit College in 1844

Vyakarana

Studies in the *Vyakarana* classes took three years, during which the students had to study the following works :

Title/Subjects

Laghu Kaumudi
Madh Kaumudi (Madhya Siddhanta Kaumudi)
Siddhanta Kaumudi
Manorama
Shabda Kaustubha
Tattvabodhini
Shabdaratna
Paribhashendu Shekhara
Shekhara
Bhasha (*Mahabhashya* ?)
Kaiyata
Vivarana
Vaiyakarana Bhushana (*Sara* ?)
Manjusha
Kashika
Pada-Manjari
Vyakarana Paniniya
Kavya
Sahid (*Sahitya*)
Kosha
Nataka
Alamkara
Chhanda

Dharma

Yajnavalkya Smriti
Mitakshara
Dayabhaga
Beoharatal (*Vyavaharatattwa*)
Deetat (*Dayatattwa*)
Dayakarma Sangraha
Birmitrod (*Biramitrodaya* ?)
Dae (*Daya* ?)
Parasharmadhivi (*Parasharamadhaviya*)
Naresindh (Nirnaya Sindhu)

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Jyotish Shastra*

Shighra Bodha
Meerchintamani (*Mihirchintamani* ?)
Lilawati
Vijaganita
Shiromani (*Siddhanta Shiromani*)
Marichee
Barahi Samhita (work of Varahamihir)
Vashishta Samhita (work of Vashishtha)

Purana

Titles / Subjects

Bhagavata
Markandeya
Matsya
Bhahish (*Bhavishya* ?)
Barmobaiwart (*Brahma-Vaivarta*)
Brahmanda
Brahma
Beeshnu (*Vishnu*)
Vamana
Vayu
Bara (*Varaha*)
Agni
Nir Sinh (*Nrisimha*)
Padma
Kurma
Skanda
Sing (?)
Garurh
Ramain (*Ramayana*)
Mahabharata
Kapilasutra ka tika (in Hindi)
Samkhyakaumudi ka tika (in Hindi)
Patanjalasutra
Ramanandi Vritti
Vyasa Bhashya
Vachaspati Vivarana

Nyaya

Titles / Subjects

Bhasha Parichheda

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* The above mentioned books were considered most essential, but there were about fifty other works that also should have been studied.

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Harika Wali (*Karika Vali*)
Muktavali
Dinakari
Tarkaprakasha
Panchintamani (*Panchachintamani*)
Shiromani
Mathuri
Jagadishi
Gadadhari
Vadaprativada
Shaktivada

Vedanta

Vedantasara
Vedanta Paribhasha
Panchadashi
Siddhantalesha
Adh Karmala (*Adhikaranamala* ?)
Sutrbrit (*Sutravritti*)
Seetrbhash (*Sutrabhashya*)
Bachispat (*Vachaspati*)
Beharan (*Vivarana* ?)
Kalpataru
Admaidsiddhi (*Advaitasiddhi*)
Gaura-Brahmanandi
Upanishad Bhashya

Mimamsa

Jaimanseetr (*Jaiminisutra*)
Raghobhatibute (*Raghubhatti Vritti*)
Shabeashami krit Bhash (*Shavaraswami krita Bhashya*)
Baratika (*Vartika*)
Ranak (*Ranaka*)
Adhikarmmala (*Adhikaranamala*)
Shastradipika
Bhat kaistuf (*Bhatta Kaustubha*)
etc.

Samkhya

Samkhyakarika
Sankkamudi (*Samkhya-Kaumudi*)
Kapila Sutra
Kapila Sutra ka tika (*in Hindi*)
Samkhya kaumudi ka tika (*in Hindi*)

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Samkhya kaumudi ka bhashya (*in Hindi*)
Patanjala Sutra
Ramanandi brit (*Ramanandi Vritti*)
Vyasa Bhashya
Pachaspati bebaran (*Vachaspati-Vivarana*)

Vaidyaka

Though there was no *Vaidyaka* class taught during this period, the following works among others were available for students of the Indian Medical Science.

Titles

Lolimnaj (?)
Sharandhar (*Sharangadhara*)
Modhonidhan (*Madhavanidana*)
Alankaradarpana
Alankaradarpana ka tika (*in Hindi*)
Madhkosh (*Madhukosha* ?)
Rasamanjari
Yobshatak (*Yogashataka* ?)
Yogaratnavali
Sushruta
Vagbhata
Charaka
Bhaoparkash (*Bhavaprakasha*)

It is important to note that there was no Veda class during the time of the Principal Muir.

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APPENDIX - II

Classes and Scholars of the Jaynarayan School in 1818

English :

First class : (1) Ram Ruveya (2) Ram Lochan (3) Ram Guttee (Gati) (4) Bishnoo (5) Chuggun (6) Baboolal (7) Jewan (8) Sew Pursad (9) Gopal (10) Ram Gopal (11) Kisshun Mohan (12) Madhoo Chund (13) Bhyro (14) Goluck Chund (15) Punchoo.

Second Class : (1) Ramheat (2) Budreenath (3) Deen Dial (Dayal) (4) Gopalee (5) Bhagwan (6) Kalinath (7) Bhupoot (8) Bahadoor (9) Krishna (10) Jewan Kishan (11) Girdharee (12) Amaum Ali (13) Punah Ali.

Third Class : (1) Raghubeer Dial (Dayal) (2) Kedder (3) Girija Dutt (4) Ive Baksh (5) Bhyro (6) Gangadhar (7) Balkrishna (8) Tukaram (9) Jewtal (10) Ramdial (Ramdayal) (11) Casheenath (12) Bhagwan Chund (13) Huree Narain (14) Bhowanee.

Hindi :

(1) Soojan (2) Jawdeo (3) Sungun (4) Baldeve (Baldeo) (5) Sheo Sahai (6) Ayodhya Prasad (7) Parusottam (Purusottum) (8) Babooa (9) Doorga (10) Diamkrihna (Daya Krishna ?).

Persian :

(1) Hurry Prasad (2) Munsur Ali (3) Ahmed Ali (4) Bahadoor (5) Ramjan (6) Radhekissen (7) Hassim Buksh (8) Wans Ali (9) Hingun (10) Insad Ali (11) Mohomed Ali (12) Mihir (Meher) Ali (13) Akbar Ali (14) Wahid Ali (15) Ram Buksh (16) Devi Dial (Dayal) (17) Azaghun (18) Hurreo (19) Rahmnt Ali (20) Hyder Ali (21) Shankur (22) Ramdhan (23) Bisheswar (24) Kali Churan (25) Ganesh (26) Doorga Deen (27) Bishen Dial (Dayal) (28) Thakur Dial (Dayal) (29) Beharee (30) Beneram (31) Ram Dial (Dayal) (32) Behoor Ali (33) Guzil Ali (34) Gholam Ali (35) Moobarum Ali (36) Ali Buksh (37) Hossain Baksh.

Bengali :

(1) Huree (2) Giree (3) Ramdhan (4) Gopal (5) Kamal (6) Kashee (7) Buttoo (8) Sheboo (9) Jugut Burdhan (10) Bowanee (11) Gunput (12) Eshwar (13) Suboo (14) Kashee (15) Kashi (16) Ganesh (17) Lutchman.

There were a total number of 106 students.

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APPENDIX - III

Courses of Study at Jaynarayan School in 1820

ENGLISH

FIRST CLASS

Reading, spelling and translating the English Reader, Exercise on the rule of syntax and the rule of three.

Arithmetic : Working the Single of Three; writing the 9th in Interest of Hope's Arithmetic Multiplication Tables; working Compound Interest; reading, spelling and translation of Joce's Dialogue on Mechanics and Astronomy; 13th problem of Terrestrial Globe-Blark's Universal Preceptor for Astronomy and Agriculture.

Geography : Geography with meaning and translation with use of Globe; use of Terrestrial Globe; Geography of India printed by School Book Society; Goldsmith's Grammar of Geography; names of Asiatic nations, islands, peninsulas, capes, mountains, seas, rivers; Grey's Geography.

History : History of Joseph, reading and spelling; the History of England (e.g., England Under the Reign of William, the Conqueror etc.); reading and spelling the general outline of Ancient History (e.g., Capture of Babylon by Eyrus); Robinson's Grammar of History.

Biblical Studies : St. Luke's Gospel—Acts of Apostles; learning by heart the 7th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel; repeating the Commandments St. Mark's Gospel; learning by heart Martyn's translation of Christ's Sermon on the Mount; repeating the Ten Commandments; learning by heart the 43rd-2nd of the second part of Wall's Catechism; repetition of the whole of Wall's Catechism.

Writing : On paper, writing large, round and small hand.

SECOND CLASS

Language & Literature : Reading and spelling in Dyche's (?) Spelling Book with translation; reading and spelling National Society's Central School Book; acquiring in Grammar (e.g., 18th rule of syntax); spelling from printed cards; working.

Arithmetic : Working long dimension; Multiplication Tables.

History : Reading and spelling the General Outline of Ancient History .

Biblical Studies : Reading the miracles of Christ, learning the 7th Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel; repeating the Commandments.

Writing : Writing on slate from dictation.

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THIRD CLASS

Language & Literature : Reading and spelling in Charity School Book; reading the National Society Central Schoolbook; spelling from printed cards; acquiring in grammar—the pronouns; reading and spelling the third lesson of Lancaster's Boards.

Arithmetic : Working the single rule of subtraction and multiplication; working comp (compound) addition; learning by heart the Multiplication Table.

Biblical Studies : Repeating the Commandments; spelling the Discourses of Christ.

Writing : Writing on slate.

FOURTH CLASS

Language & Literature : Reading and spelling words of 2 and 3 syllables from Murray's First Spelling Book; reading and spelling from printed cards; acquiring the substantive in Grammar; spelling from Lancaster's New Invented Spelling Book; reading and spelling the 2nd lesson of Lancaster's Boards.

Arithmetic : Learning the Multiplication Table.

Biblical Study : Reading and spelling the Discourses of Saviours.

Writing : Writing on slate from dictation.

FIFTH CLASS

Language : Acquiring the alphabet; reading and spelling from Lancaster's Boards.

Writing : Writing on the sand table.

PERSIAN

FIRST CLASS

Language & Literature : Some acquiring of a Persian Grammar called *Luquaquish*; reading the *Bastan*, the *Goolistan*; reading Nizamut's works of Rebool Fuzl's and such books as are used in native schools; reading the Persian Testament.

SECOND CLASS

Persian Grammar : Persian Testament & other Persian books.

THIRD CLASS

Persian Grammar : Persian Grammar & other Persian books.

HINDI

Fables in Hindi; St. John's and St. Luke's Gospels; committing to memory Catechism; writing on the floor.

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BENGALI

Fables and Gospel in Bengali; writing on the palmyra leaf.

SANSKRIT

Grammar in Sanskrit.

CLASS FOR GIRLS

The history of Muhammed; Urdu Gospels of St. Matthew; some were acquiring the alphabet and various pronunciations; reading the Urdu Spelling Book.

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16. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
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63. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
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124. Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mittra, his son Baboo Gurudas Mittra, and his grandson, Rai Pramada Das Mittra Bahadur, p. 5.
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146. The author is extremely grateful to the Late Ramcharan Chakraborti, the first Indian Head Master of the Jaynarayan School (1935-1941) for supply of invaluable pieces of information on that institution, such as these, to him. These records will be cited henceforth as Jaynarayan School—Old Records.

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174. See History of Sanskrit College in this chapter.
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181. A graphical presentation of number of teachers and students during 1859-1959 has been made by Ashutosh Das, a student of the school. Op. cit., *Vani : Shati Visheshank.*
182. *Ibid.*, B. Varma, *History of our College*, p. 12.
183. See Chapter V—Condition of women.

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184. See History of Jaynarayan School in this chapter.
185. See History of other Missionary Institutions in this chapter.
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187. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 333-35.
188. *Ibid.*, p. 339.
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191. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*. Account of her visit to Jaynarayan School on January 18, 1847.
192. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 379.
193. *Ibid.*, pp. 379-80.
194. *Ibid.*, pp. 380.
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197. Quoted in *Pravasi* (a Bengali Monthly), Paush 1329 (Bengali year).
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CHAPTER XIV

PRINTING AND THE PRESS

THE VITAL ROLE OF THE PRINTING PRESS

One of the greatest contributions of Western civilization to the modernizing of India is the printing press, an invention that revolutionized mass-communications and the dissemination of knowledge through the printing of books, newspapers, magazines and journals. Thus, printing technology, though not fully developed in nineteenth century, played a singular role in replacing the age-old, hazardous and time consuming system of producing copied manuscripts by the new, efficient system of publishing printed materials, thereby opening the floodgates of knowledge to the common man.

While India's first printing press was set up as early as 1780 in Calcutta with James Augustus Hicky's weekly paper called the *Bengal Gazette*, Varanasi made a rather late entry into the field of printing.[1]

PRINTING IN THE CITY

We have already quoted Jayanarayan Ghoshal's letter addressed to the Church Missionary Society (CMS) committee in 1818 proposing that CMS set up a printing-house for publishing school books to be distributed all over the country. The committee, however, declined to take the initiative and nothing materialized in Varanasi in this regard.*

During his stay in Varanasi as Assay Master, James Prinsep was said to have set up a printing press of 'his own entire manufacture'. At this press papers of local interest, including some of the Literary Society also formed by him, were printed under his personal supervision and the 'sheets were turned out with very credible neatness and typographical skills.' But further details of this printing-house are not available.[2]

The first printing-house in the City about which we have some information was set up in the third decade of the nineteenth century under

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* See Chapter XIII for details.

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the name of Anjuman Press. Anjuman printed the *Garhastha Chikitsa* in 1827.[3] Like all its immediate successors, Anjuman Press printed books by lithograph in Hindi. Sarasudhanadhi Press, which once produced Hindi books, printed the *Bharatvarshiya Itihas* in 1839.[4] The Banaras Akhbar Press, which was patronized by Raja Shivaprasad and named after the journal *Banaras Akhbar*, was set up in 1844 or 1845 and played a pioneering role in the field of printing-houses in the City. This house enjoyed a comparatively long career, surviving till as late as 1874,[5] and printed a good number of works that are still preserved in the Ramnagar Fort Library including, *Shukbahattari* (1850), *Sikkhon ka Udayast* (1851), *Yuktiramayana* (1851), *Rasiksundara* (1853), *Gangabhakti* (1853) and *Sagunauti* (1854).

The Benares Recorder Press derived its name from a journal of the same name that it published and was situated in the Rajabazar New Mint area (Nayee Tankshal). Colonel Pew and others[6] established this house and started printing the journal in 1847 or 1848. Though this journal was soon discontinued, it would appear that the Recorder Press had a longer run continuing to print Hindi books. This is corroborated by the following fact : There is one book in the Ramnagar Fort Collection entitled *Manasadipika*,[7] possibly a commentary on the *Ramacharitmanas* of Tulsidas, written by Raghunath Das and printed by order of Babu Prasiddhanarain Singh of the royal family of Varanasi. This book states that it was printed by one Bush Sahib (?) in 1853 at the Recorder Akhbar Press situated in the New Mint area. This Recorder Akhbar Press cannot but be the former Benares Recorder Press. The Martanda Press, which once printed Hindi books, printed the *Shatpanchashi ki Bhasha* in 1847.[8] These presses must have been printing books in lithography.

A major development took place in the field of printing in Varanasi in 1849, when one Dr Lazarus established the Medical Hall Press primarily for printing labels used by the Medical Hall, a medical shop he owned. Soon this press developed as the 'completest of English and Vernacular Press'.[9]

Medical Hall Press, which in 1858[10] was equipped for stereo-typography, type-founding, binding, ruling and machine printing, became instrumental in printing English and Hindi works and enjoyed a long life-span. *Ganit Prakash* and *Itihastimirnashak* were also printed here in 1858 and 1868 respectively. *The History of Government Pathshala of Benares* by G. Nicholls was printed at Medical Hall as well.

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Varanasi Chandrodaya, the first Bengali weekly brought out in the City, was published in 1849 and was most likely printed by the Bag-o-Bahar Press. It follows then that Bag-o-Bahar Press was set up at least by 1849, if not earlier. It derived its name from a journal it had also printed. An earlier issue of the *Kashivartaprakashika*, another Bengali journal, was printed at this same press.[11]

Sudhakar Press, named after the Hindi journal *Sudhakar*, was established in 1850[12] and printed the following books among others : *Upasanasarvasva* (1851), *Krishnacharanaparicharya Vivriti* (1851), *Shringarasamgraha* (1852), *Ashwinikumaravindu* (1854), *Ramaranga* (1855) and *Kshatrivanshaujagar* (1859).[13] The Dhundhiraj Ganesh Press was another Hindi press extant in the City in 1850 and this house printed the *Geetavali Ramayan*.[14]

The Mufad Hind Press, situated in Pande Haoli, printed some issues of the Bengali journal *Kashivartaprakashika*[15] in 1851 and also a Hindi book entitled *Sukhasagar* in 1854.[16]

The Kashiyantra Press at Kedar Ghat in Kalinath Bapuli's (Raja Babu) residence, was set up to take over printing of the *Kashivartaprakashika* in November of 1851. This press also printed the *Aftab-i-Hind*, an Urdu journal.[17]

The Sultan Hind Press printed Hindi publications including, *Gitagovindadarsha* in 1852, *Anandambunidhi* in 1855 and *Lilavati* in 1858.[18] The Kashi Press and Bharat Jivan Press printed the following Hindi books, *Padaratnavali* and *Lakshmanshatak*, respectively, in 1854.[19] Buddhivilas Press, a Hindi press, printed the *Vidhavavivahakhandan* (in Refutation of Widow-Remarriage) in 1855. Divakar Press, also a Hindi press at Bhadaini, printed *Kashiyatra* in 1856 and *Kavittwa Ramayana* in 1858. Another Hindi publisher, Light Press, printed *Rama Svayambara* in 1857. Light Press seems to have survived a relatively long time as a collection of songs entitled *Malar-Hindola-Kajri Adi Samgraha* was printed from a printing-house of that name as late as in 1880.[20] The Chandreshwar Press at Reuri Talao printed *Devibhakta* in 1857.[21]

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PRINTING HOUSES

Thus, even before 1857, Varanasi witnessed a good number of printing-houses turning out books in the five major languages of Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and English. Owing to a want of data, we could not ascertain the exact dates of the establishment of these houses in some

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cases and we have mentioned only the dates of the earliest available works printed by them. Nevertheless, it is evident from the above survey that at least eighteen printing-houses emerged in the City printing books and a few journals in the pre-1857 period. Most of these houses only printed works in Hindi in response to local demand, and only a few printed in more than one language.

But most of these printing-houses, with the notable exceptions of Banaras Akhbar Press, Medical Hall Press, Sudhakar Press and Kashiyantra Press, did not attain even a minimum standard of quality. Quite obviously, there was greater demand at the better printing-houses, and while most of the remaining houses sprang up like mushrooms, they, presumably, ceased to function after printing only a few works.

Another noticeable feature of these printing-houses is that the majority of the pre-1857 presses, including the big four houses mentioned above, emerged in the fifth decade of the nineteenth century. Without more data, the circumstances leading to the emergence and development of these houses, not to mention pertinent details regarding various publications etc., cannot be properly examined. However, on the basis of stray bits of information available, we may at least offer certain general observations regarding the printing-houses of Varanasi.

One of these being that from the City's location within an expansive Hindi beltway, it is obvious that there was great potential to market Hindi works both here and in surrounding areas. Again, with the ushering in of the Modern Age in India, the new spirit that had been infused into Bengali literature was instilled into Hindi literature as well. Thus, side by side with a vast body of literature in verse, a new style of Hindi prose developed by the middle of the nineteenth century. This and an emergence of some Hindi writers during this time led to the onset of an enthusiastic culture of both traditional and modern Hindi literature. The Hindi press also enjoyed an additional advantage, since most of the same Devanagari script could be used for printing both Sanskrit and Hindi titles. Keeping these factors in view, one can easily understand why within a comparatively short period quite a few Hindi presses sprang up in the City, some of which flourished. The Benares Recorder Press and the Medical Hall Press, though mainly English printing-houses, printed Hindi books as well.

The gradual popularity of printed books, improvements in printing technology, innovations in the printing of the *Nagari* script, and, in addition, the lessons learned from experiments in this field in the pre-1850

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period, all helped post-1850 printing-houses to move ahead with confidence. Consequently, the rate at which both Hindi and Sanskrit works were printed increased in tandem with improved printing standards after 1850.[22] Now let us take note of the nature of books and journals printed at these houses.

In Sanskrit, mainly traditional works were printed for the obvious reason that newer types of works had yet to be written during that period. But by the 1850s, the printing of translations from English into Sanskrit, with a view to disseminating Western learning through Sanskrit, was initiated with works such as *Vidyachakra* in 1849, *Vekaniyasutravyakhya* in 1852 and *Nyayakaumudi* in 1855. *Khrishtadharmakaumudi*[23] was also printed around that time. The picture was slightly different with Hindi publications because various types of books were written in Hindi around that period, including *Janakimangal*, *Ramachandrika*, *Lakshmanshatak*, *Gitagovindadarsha*, *Upasanasarvasva*, *Kashiyatra*, *Rukminiparinaya*, *Ganitprakash*, *Lilavati*, *Shringarasamgraha*, etc.[24] Books like the *Ajamgarh Reader* (1855) and *Laḍko ki Paḍne ki Kitab* (1852), written by Raja Shivaprasad, were meant for young learners. Such works such as *Sikkhon ka Udayast* (The Rise and Fall of the Sikhs) in 1851 and *Bhartvarshiya Itihas* (The History of India) in 1839, on the other hand, must have been designed to create greater awareness of the country's past among students in particular and people in general. Books like *Vidhavavivahakhandan*, which dealt with sociological questions like widow-remarriage, were printed in 1855. *Garhastha Chikitsa*, a medical work dealing with domestic treatments, was printed as early as 1827.

Despite the fact that Varanasi was one of the important centres for the Christian missions and many books on Christian theology were being produced in different Indian languages for the propagation of Christianity in India, such books were not generally printed in Varanasi, except a few like *Khrishtadharma Kaumudi*, written by Dr Ballantyne, Principal of Benares Sanskrit College. Thus, though books printed in this City were insignificant both in number and in scope, especially in comparison with those produced in Calcutta, the British Indian Capital, Varanasi should be credited with venturing into this new direction, resulting in a gradual rise to a higher standard in the field of printing and publication in course of time. Finally, as already indicated, local printing-houses played a vital role in fostering the spread of education, disseminating knowledge and creating awareness among the people of the City and its outskirts through the printing of books and journals.

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THE BACKGROUND OF JOURNALISM IN INDIA

Journalism itself does not have such a long tradition, being a nineteenth century development even in Europe. The profession of journalism was not even considered very respectable in Britian at the outset.[25] *The Bengal Gazette*, published by James Augustus Hicky in Calcutta in 1780, was the pioneer in the field of Indian journalism. Hicky's journal was succeeded by a series of English-language newspapers[26] and journals. Periodicals in Bengali appeared in 1818 when *Digdarshan*, a Bengali monthly, and *Samachar Darpan*, a Bengali weekly, were launched in that same year. *Udanta Martanda*, possibly the first published Hindi weekly ever, which was edited by Pandit Yugal Kishore Mandal of Kanpur, and *Samachar Sudhavarshan*, edited by Shyam Sundar Sen* and possibly the first Hindi daily, were launched in 1826 and 1859, respectively, in Calcutta**.[27] Again, *Jam-i-Jahan Numa*, an Urdu weekly, was published in 1822 in Calcutta. Two other Urdu journals entitled *Syed-ul-Akhbar* and *Delhi Akhbar* were published in 1837 and 1838, respectively, in Delhi.

The early English newspapers and journals of India were motivated more to amusing their readers and earning money than to practising responsible journalism. Of course, some of these papers, though managed and edited by the British, did not spare the British Government or its employees and vehemently criticized them on various occasions. These papers published such items as the Orders of the Government, Indian news, letters to the editor, personal news, notes on fashion, extracts from newspapers and journals published in England, parliamentary reports, newsletters, reports from various parts of Europe, advertisements, etc. Most of these items, including editorials on political topics and military affairs written mainly for the appreciation of the English, were hardly of any real interest or benefit to the Indian people. It was on this point that the papers run by Englishmen contrasted sharply with those run by Indians. Generally, papers under Indian management were distinguished by a higher sense of responsibility in disseminating 'useful knowledge and

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* Simultaneously, Shyam Sundar Sen also edited and published a Bengali daily of the same name *Samachar Sudhavarshan*, Brajendra Nath Bandyopadhyay—*Bangla Samayik Patra*, Vol. I, pp. 72-73.

** According to another opinion, *Udanta Martanda* was published from Serampore in Hooghly, Bengal. Prof. Garcin de Tassy, *Histoire de la littérature Hindouie et Hindoustanie*, 2 ème éd., Paris, 1872, Vol.3, Appendice, p. 487.

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information' and in discussing all manner of problems of public interest with a view to instructing the people[28] and in fostering an awareness of these issues.

But the growth and development of journalism in this country was not free and unobstructed, nor could it be so under the imperialist Government. Being annoyed with both just and, sometimes, unjust personal attacks by mainly British-run papers, having apprehended that the publication of military news might instruct an invading Emperor Napoleon, and ever sensitive that comments of a seditious nature might shake the allegiance of its Indian subjects and the Indian Army in particular, the Government gradually tightened its grip on the press. This becomes evident from the codification of rules to be enforced on the print media under Wellesly's Press Regulation of 1799.[29] Government control of the press culminated with Adam's notorious Press Ordinance of 1823, creating a great commotion both among European and Indian journalists of Calcutta. In 1835, however, the famous Press Act of Sir Charles Metcalfe relaxed these controls and was appreciated and welcomed by Indians and the liberal minded Englishmen alike for the freedoms it granted to the press.

JOURNALS OF VARANASI (pre-1850)

With this sketchy history of journalism in the British capital of Calcutta, let us now focus our attention on the state of journals and journalism in Varanasi. Though the City did not have a newspaper or journal of its own until 1844, with the first publication of the *Benares Akhbar*, it was not altogether unaware of the growth and development of journalism in Calcutta. Babu Prasiddhanarain Singh of the Raj family of Varanasi was a subscriber to the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* published in Calcutta, indicating that papers and journals from Calcutta were circulated in Varanasi. Again, Reverend James Long also records that some Bengali journals were circulated as far as the Punjab.[30] When the Hindi weekly, *Udanta Martanda*, was published in Calcutta or in Serampore on May 30, 1826, *Samachar Darpan*, a Bengali journal, commented that the Hindi-speaking people of Varanasi and other places would benefit from reading pages of the *Udanta Martanda*, as the same information and commentary were meant for them as well.[31] The *Udanta Martanda* continued for nearly one year and a half, but publication ceased in December of 1827 for want of subscribers[32] and we do not know if this weekly had any circulation in Varanasi at all.

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We may presume that while there was an obvious demand for English newspapers and journals published out of station among the Europeans of this place,[33] local Indians, with few exceptions, held little interest in them. Finally, in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, the City first witnessed a locally-based journal published in the local Hindi language. This journal, the *Banaras Akhbar* or Varanasi News, a weekly*, came into being at the initiative and patronage of a local aristocrat, Raja Shivaprasad. We are not sure whether the *Banaras Akhbar* drew any inspiration from the *Udanta Martanda* of Calcutta, although such inspiration is not altogether unlikely. Details regarding the *Banaras Akhbar*, which must have left some impact upon its successors as the pioneer of journalism in Varanasi, unfortunately, are not known. And those pieces of information that are available, are also controversial.

The view of one scholar,[34] that the *Banaras Akhbar* was published in 1845 under the editorship of Govinda Raghunath Thatte, a Maharashtrian, has been contradicted by another scholar. The latter holds that the *Akhbar* was, in fact, published in 1844 under the editorship of Taracharan Mitra, a Bengalee. In support of this second view, a news report has been quoted from the *Samachar Chandrika*, a Bengali journal published in Calcutta, dated July 25, 1844, in which the editor states that he had received the eighth issue of the *Banaras Akhbar*.[35] If this is true, then the *Akhbar*'s first year of publication was definitely 1844. Even so, it may be reasonably doubted that Taracharan Mitra continued as the publication's editor to the last, since one Under-Secretary to the Government of India wrote a letter to the editor of the *Banaras Akhbar* on December 31, 1847, in which he addresses Govinda Raghunath as editor.[36] Again, available copies of this Hindi publication of the 1850s from the Banaras Akhbar Press bore the name of Raghunath either as editor or commentator. Nevertheless, the views of these two scholars, Balmukund Gupta and Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay, regarding the editorship of the *Akhbar* may be reconciled if Taracharan were the first editor and Raghunath succeeded him later on, but we cannot now verify whether this is how events actually played out.

We do know that this journal was patronized by the Raja of Nepal, whose wife was residing in Varanasi at that time.[37] The *Banaras Akhbar* was also printed in lithography, but the standard of printing was reported to have been poor.[38] Moreover, though the printed script was Nagari, the

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* Kuber Nath Sukul, *Varanasi Down the Ages*, p. 299.

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language used was influenced more by Urdu than by Hindi, and practically speaking, resulted in a queer amalgam of those two languages. On the other hand, a verse* composed to describe the *Akhbar* motto that appeared in one issue of the journal was rather lucid.[39] Each issue of this journal contained some translation from Sanskrit works on law, local news, etc.

The *Banaras Akhbar* was regularly sent to the Governor-General in Calcutta; other details regarding circulation are not known.[40] Though this journal was the first of its kind in the City and continued for nearly four years—a longer period than any of its English, Urdu, Hindi or Bengali contemporaries—the fact that it could not survive even longer was perhaps owing to its crude language and bad newsprint and publication ceased around 1847.[41]

The initial hesitancy of Hindi prose, while slowly coming out from under the dominant spell of Urdu, was distinctly reflected in the *Banaras Akhbar*. Consequently, *Khaḍiboli* was found to be emerging as the standard medium of Hindi prose within its pages. And though the journal was discontinued, the press of the same name presumably enjoyed a long life and continued to print books, as we have already seen.[42]

The *Benares Gazette*, a weekly, was also published by the editor of the *Banaras Akhbar* possibly in 1845. Though this journal had an English title, it was published in Urdu and enjoyed only a short career.[43] According to Prof. Garcin De Tassy in his *La Langue et la Litterature Hindoustanies*, the editor of both these journals was a zealous Hindu who defended the Hindu religion with enthusiasm against the preaching of the Christian missionaries.[44] The annual subscription rate of both the *Banaras Akhbar* and the *Benares Gazette* was twelve Rupees each.[45] Among a total of seventy subscribers to these two magazines, there were, interestingly enough, as many as thirty-six Europeans, twenty-nine Hindus and five Muslims. The Press would incur a monthly deficit of Rs. 29 and 8 annas against a total expenditure of Rs. 99 and 8 annas (establishment : Rs. 45;

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* सुबनारस अखबार यह शिवप्रसाद आधार
बुद्धि विवेक जन निपुण को चितवृत बारंवार।
गिरिजापत नगरी जहाँ गंगा अमल जलधार
नेत शुभाशुभ मुकुर को लेखो बिचार बिचार।

[This newspaper, the daily matutinal companion, is like the grace of the Lord Shiva and it often fascinates intelligent and conscientious people. This is that famous city where flows the pure water of the Ganga. And this is that paper which brings to light all good and bad news alike with just comments.]

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paper : Rs. 12; ink : Rs. 3; newspapers purchased : Rs. 7 and 8 annas; postage : Rs. 10; rent : Rs. 2; and contingencies : Rs. 20). With only a total subscriber income of Rs. 70 per month, this deficit was possibly partly met by advertising charges.[46]

Around 1850, two more journals were published in Varanasi. One of these was the *Bag-o-Bahar* and the other *Sairin-i-Hind*.[47] The *Bag-o-Bahar*, a weekly in Urdu, edited by Baboo Kedar Nath Ghosh, was patronized by the Raja of Varanasi.[48] The *Sairin-i-Hind*, a weekly, was printed in the form of an eight page notebook in folio with two columns and used to publish enlightened editorials and interesting news.[49]

In 1847 or 1848, Colonel Pew and some others established the Recorder Press and published the *Benares Recorder*. Though this journal continued for nearly two years and was reported to have never flourished, it deserves credit for being the first English-language journal published in Varanasi.[50]

The first Bengali journal in the City, *Varanasi Chandroday*, was a weekly, first published on May 2, 1849. It was edited by Umakanta Bhattacharya, the former editor and proprietor of the *Samachar Jnanadarpan*, a Bengali journal from Calcutta. This journal, at a subscription rate of eight annas per month, was printed in litho and was published every Wednesday[51] perhaps at Bag-o-Bahar Press. In November of the same year, *Bhairavadanda*, another Bengali weekly edited by Umakanta, the editor of the *Varanasi Chandroday*, and printed in litho at Bag-o-Bahar, was also published. The *Bhairavadanda* was reported to have been designed with a view to giving fitting replies to uncharitable comments made against the holy city of Kashi by the *Sambad Rasamudgar*, a Calcutta-based Bengali journal.[52] Both the *Varanasi Chandroday*, which continued for nearly a year, and the *Bhairavadanda*, which survived for a lesser period, ceased publication at the same time in late 1849.[53]

JOURNALS OF VARANASI (1850-57) : THE *KASHIVARTAPRAKASHIKA*

The first standard journal of any language in Varanasi was the *Sudhakar*,* published in 1850 and edited by Taramohan (Taracharan) Mitra, a Bengali, with the assistance of others.** Taramohan utilized his

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* According to Prof. Tassy, the title was *Sudhakar Akhbar*, as stated in *La Langue et la Littérature Hindoustanies*, pp. 23-24.

** According to another opinion, Taramohan was the founder of this magazine while its editor was Pandit Ambika Prasad Vajpayee, a scholar of Hindi—K. Chandramouli, *Kashi—The City Luminous*, p. 246.

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experience as editor of the *Banaras Akhbar* in publishing the *Sudhakar*, which showed definite improvement over its predecessor.[54] This journal, which was possibly a weekly, initially contained matters written in both Hindi and Bengali,* though after 1853 it became a purely Hindi publication. It was printed by Pandit Ratneshwar Tewari from Sudhakar Press. This journal, which published both entertaining and educative items, had about seventy-four subscribers at one point in time, including fifty Hindus, two Muslims and also twenty-two Europeans, with monthly income and expenditure of Rs.79 and Rs.50 respectively. It published articles on such subjects as mutual aid, 'popular errors', influence of the moon on animal husbandry and crop production, and even a translation of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* among others.[55] *Sudhakar* was a profitable publication and, according to Prof. Tassy,[56] propitious to the British Government, but it did not continue long.[57]

Another journal, *Benares Harkara*, was published weekly from 1851,[58] but how long it continued is not known to us. The only journal during this period about which we are fortunate to have some detailed information is the *Kashivartaprakashika*, a Bengali journal. Declaring itself to be the successor of the *Varanasi Chandroday*, this journal was edited by Kashidas Mitra. Initially a fortnightly, it later became a weekly. The *Kashivartaprakashika* was first published on June 1, 1851, and like the *Varanasi Chandroday*, it too was printed in litho at Bag-o-Bahar Press. Later, it was printed by the Mufad Hind Press, and finally, by its own printing-house called the Kashi Yantra Press. Monthly subscription was eight annas and the yearly fee was five rupees; this remained the same even after the publication converted to a weekly on January 1, 1853. In its first issue, the *Kashivartaprakashika* announced that the main objective of the publication was to fill the vacuum created by the disappearance of the *Varanasi Chandroday* and the absence of any other Bengali newspaper in Varanasi, as well as to promote causes of local Bengalee residents. This journal aspired to satisfy readers far more than the *Varanasi Chandroday* had done by publishing news and information of varied and absorbing interest.

That the paper was published with great care and had attained a commendable standard was corroborated by the *Purnachandroday*, a contemporary Bengali newspaper in Calcutta. On the occasion of the

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* According to Prof. Tassy, it was published in Hindi and Urdu—*La Langue et la Littérature Hindoustanies*, pp.23-24.

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Kashivartaprakashika's launch to a weekly format, the latter observed that this would bring additional pressure to bear upon the editor to maintain the quality of both content and appearance.

This journal, hitherto mostly unknown, has brought to light a wealth of valuable data on the City during this period that have been utilized extensively for the first time in the present study. Unlike *Sudhakar*, it also tried to create and foster awareness among its readers by drawing attention to any dereliction of duty by Government officials, especially the police, and, above all, to the unscrupulous exploitation of Indian subjects by the British Imperialists.[59] Thus, this periodical occupies a special position among all contemporary publications of Varanasi for its rare display of courage, wisdom and public spirit. One possible reason behind this was that Kashinath Mitra, the editor, belonged to a segment of the intelligentsia of Bengal that had been exposing the dark side of the British administration in India through their writings and speeches.

In the *Kashivartaprakashika* we also get specimens of Bengali verse composed in Varanasi, an example of which, published on the occasion of *Durga Puja*, is given in the footnote.[60]* Of course, these verses were composed in the *payar* meter following the tradition of Bengali poems of those days and there is no unique feature attributable to the verse just quoted. Regrettably, the *Kashivartaprakashika* ceased publication in 1853 and we could not determine a reason for this discontinuation in our studies.

The *Kashivartavaha*, another Bengali journal, which claimed to have been the successor of the *Kashivartaprakashika*, was published in 1853 under the editorship of Govinda Chandra Bandyopadhyay.[61]

Kashidas Mitra, the editor of the *Kashivartaprakashika*, is also credited with publishing the first Urdu journal of Varanasi, entitled *Aftab-i-Hind*, in the Persian script in 1852 from the Kashi Yantra Press.[62] According to Prof. Tassy, however, this journal was edited by Govinda

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* সুখ শরৎ ঋত্তঃ মায়ের আগমন হেত্তঃ আনন্দ উৎসব সভে করে।
বস্ত্র অলংকার ঃ পরিবার পরিবার ঃ নানা আয়োজন ঘরে ঘরে।।
ঘর দ্বার পরিস্কৃত ঃ সাজান বিবিধ মত ঃ নিজ নিজ বৃত্তি অনুসারে।

At the advent of the Mother Durga during the happy autumn season, all and sundry busied themselves in a gay festive mood. Preparations started for buying new clothes and ornaments. People in all stations of life cleansed and decorated their houses according to their respective professions.

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Raghunath and reputed for it elaborate style and valuable scientific and literary information.[63] Like its contemporaries, the *Aftab-i-Hind* was probably short-lived as well.

We should also mention here the name of another journal published in English and Hindi entitled *Benares Magazine* which had two parts; while one part was devoted to preaching Christianity, the other was devoted to general literature. This magazine was, however, printed by Mirzapur Press or Orphan School Press in Mirzapur under the editorial management of the Church Missionary Society and Dr J. R. Ballantyne, the Principal of the Benares Sanskrit College. In spite of this, *Benares Magazine* discontinued operations in 1849.[64]

OBSERVATIONS

The above survey shows that during this period the City witnessed journals in the four important languages of the place, namely Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and English, all of which were short-lived. Moreover, save for the solitary exception of Raja Shivaprasad's deep involvement with Banaras Akhbar Press, and presumably, with the journal of the same name printed there, all of the above journals were initiated and edited originally by non-locals, that is, by either a Bengalee, a Maharashtrian or a European. This, too, testifies to the cosmopolitan character of the City.

A close study of the contemporary Bengali newspapers and journals of Calcutta and Varanasi reveals that most of them were informed about the others' publications, and presumably, there was reciprocal circulation of such journals between Calcutta and Varanasi. The notices of publication of these Varanasi-based journals, *Banaras Akhbar*, *Bhairavadanda*, *Kashivartaprakashika*, *Aftab-i-Hind* and *Kashivartavaha*, were printed in the Calcutta-based *Samachar Chandrika* on July 25,1844, *Sambad Purnachandroday* on 2 Vaishakh, 1257 B.S. and in the *Sambad Prabhakar* on June 12, 1851, January 20, 1852 and February 8, 1858, respectively.

We have also noted above that some of the Hindi magazines of Varanasi had many European subscribers. This is significant for two reasons. Firstly, the number of European subscribers was disproportionately high, especially when population-base and language constraints are considered. This shows that Europeans shared a greater appreciation and interest in this type of media. The near non-availability of English-language news magazines in itself may have prompted some to subscribe to these native publications. Secondly, it shows that quite a few

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European residents had a commendable command of the local Hindi-language, enabling them to read and appreciate the news items, articles, opinions and commentary presented in such magazines.

IMPACT OF THE PRESS

With the scant information available regarding Varanasi-based journals, excepting *Kashivartaprakashika*, it is difficult to form a clear and comprehensive idea about the types of news, articles, special features (if any), editorial views and advertisements that were published. Without a greater supply of surviving issues, it is difficult to judge the quality of writing including the standard of language, quality of paper, printing and the like. Whatever information we could collect in this regard has been furnished.

It is evident that these publications followed, more or less, the example of similar journals in Calcutta and published chiefly news of local importance and public interest. But while many Calcutta journals took an active role in discussions and debates on current religious, social and educational issues, the involvement of Varanasi journals in such matters was almost insignificant. Some of the contemporary newspapers and journals of Calcutta flourished and became distinguished for their incessant struggle against Government policies and issues like freedom of the Press. On the contrary, the journals of Varanasi had to struggle hard for their very survival. A lack of popular enthusiasm and support was, no doubt, chiefly responsible for the pitiable condition of these journals.

Nevertheless, at least a few of these pioneers of local journalism did have some impact, inducing residents to think about and discuss matters of local and, especially, national interest. This trend, absolutely novel in the long history of Varanasi, indeed that of India itself, sparked a consciousness of one's own local circumstance *vis-à-vis* the circumstances of other peoples Indian and foreign. These journals evoked a new public spirit through protesting the wrong done by any public agency, including Government, and giving suitable expressions of grievances on issues of common interest. Thus, the City learnt a novel mode of popular protest which was different from the traditional methods of *dhurna* and *hurtal*. This call to a new spirit of public awareness and self expression by the Press, along with other factors, led to the emergence of nationalism in this City and inspired her people to

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take part in the struggle for freedom against the British imperialists along with their fellow countrymen.

Moreover, these journals emerged as a new and powerful means of mass education, supplementing and complementing more traditional methods like *yatra* (theatrical performances) and reading from scriptures with explanation, song, etc.

Judged from various standpoints, the contributions of the Press in fostering an awareness about the world in which the Banarasis were but a part, and in stimulating a new sense of community and a yearning for progress and development in them cannot be underestimated.

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CHAPTER XV

BANARASI CULTURE

THE FINER ASPECTS

In addition to being an illustrious centre of religion, education and industry, Varanasi had also emerged as the proverbial centre of Indian culture. The finer aspects of life, manifested through music, art, handicrafts, dress, food and drink, etc., added colour and glamour to Varanasi. There was hardly a city in India, nay, the world, having as many dimensions and as much diversity in the field of culture as Varanasi.

Culture, as developed here, was so distinct and so renowned that any special product or object of craftsmanship or piece of art produced in Varanasi was itself termed *Banarasi*, such as *Banarasi Sari* or *Banarasi Paan* (betel), and was looked upon with loving appreciation by others. Thus there is also the *Banaras Gharana* of music and the *Banaras Gharana* of painting. The following is an account of Varanasi's finer aspects of life with special emphasis on music and painting.

MUSIC : THE BACKGROUND

To the Hindu, God-realization has always been considered the highest goal of life, and among the various paths leading to this goal, music has occupied a high position. In Hindu Scripture, the special status of music has been expressed in a saying where the Lord declares 'I live neither in *Vaikuntha*, nor in the hearts of Yogins, but I dwell where my devotees sing in praise of me.'[1] Music not only entertains the musicians and their listeners, but, what is more significant, it elevates them to a higher plane of consciousness. It is with this idea that music has been learned, taught, and listened to by Hindus.

Music has enjoyed a venerable and rich tradition in India. In the Vedic Age treatises on music were written by great sage-musicians like Bharata, and musicians were from almost every walk of life. Music also received due attention in Dravidian India. In the Mediaeval Age, there was an unmistakable interaction between traditional Hindu and the incoming

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Islamic traditions of music, especially in the north, north-east and west of India where Muslims had settled. In these places, the Hindusthani school of music that flourished was chiefly Hindu, but it exhibited Islamic influences, too;[2] in most cases, the songs were in either Hindi or Urdu and in only a few cases, as in some *Ghazals*, the language was Persian. But in South India, especially in Tamilnadu and Karnataka, in classical music the Karnataka school prevailed.

Side by side with classical and semi-classical schools of music there developed various types of popular music in different provinces. Moreover, when the British came to India, they brought with them their own music, but unlike the Germans, musical traditions of the British were not very rich. Again, Western music as a whole was so much different from that of the Indian classical style, that, generally speaking, neither the Indians nor the British were impressed by each other's style.

According to Sanskrit treatises, music, called *tauryatrika*, has three branches, vocal, instrumental, and dance.[3] Again, music has two major divisions, theoretical (*aupapattika*) and practical (*kriyasiddhika*). Varanasi's musical traditions are both old and rich in almost all these branches of music.[4] Though references to the culture of music in Varanasi during the Vedic period are not available, profuse references to such culture in the City during the Buddhistic period indicate that the culture of music that had its beginnings in the Vedic period, flourished on a far greater scale during this time. Varanasi, which had been the seat of a number of celebrated kings and had developed both as a religious and as a commercial centre from ancient times, was never devoid of the chief patrons of music—the royal court, the nobility class and the temple-establishment.

Brahmadatta, the Kashiraj, who was referred to in the Buddhist *Jatakas*, was himself a great musician and during his time a music school was established in Varanasi. One Guptil was a famous *Veena* player. Again, ample references in Buddhistic literature to Varanasi courtesans, who were proficient in music, such as Shyama, Sulasa, Chitralekha and Atthakashi, indicate that music flourished here even in the City's very early history.[5]

After the advent of the Muslims, Varanasi emerged as a centre of Hindusthani music side by side with other centres such as Delhi, Agra, Lucknow and Gwalior. Shirqi rulers of Jaunpur,[6] especially Husain Shah Shirqi who also ruled Varanasi, were great lovers of music and patronized

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the musicians of Varanasi. Thus, they played a key role in making Varanasi a celebrated centre of music during the Middle Ages,[7] a position it continued to enjoy even in later years.

FACETS OF THE MUSICAL CENTRE

Now let us examine the different facets of this celebrated centre of music during the modern period and try to understand the circumstances leading to its reputation.

Dhrupad, Khayal, Dhamar, Telena, Ghazal, Tappa, Bhajan, Thumri, Dadra, Kajri, Chaiti and *Holi*, sung by Banarasis, especially the female singers, became very prominent in the whole of North India. Similarly, in the performance on the Veena, Shehnai, Tabla, Sarangi and also of dance, the excellence of Banarasis has been widely appreciated. Among these, while in the Dhrupad and Tappa songs and Veena playing, the tradition has more or less been followed, in the Thumri, Dadra, Tabla and Shehnai the musicians of the City showed their originality.

Among the gharanas of Thumri, those of Punjabi, Lucknow and Banarasi are renowned for their *chals* or styles. Among these, Punjabi Thumri is especially marked by the *tanakartab* like that of Khayal. But Banarasi Thumri does not have such features as *tanakari*; here emotion and bliss prevail. The Thumri of Gaya and Mirzapur may be called branches of the Thumri of Varanasi, because these were a result of the impact of the latter. Nevertheless, Varanasi is one of the main seats of the culture of Thumri in North India.

Varanasi may also be called the chief centre of Dadra songs, which, although originating as folk-song in the Bundelkhand region, developed remarkably in Varanasi. The finest style of Dadra was rendered by the *tawaifs* of the City.

Again, as a result of refinements by these tawaifs, Kajri, originally local folk music, has been beautified with subtle artistic touches. Consequently, this Kajri, which has become known as *Banaras ka Kajri*, is a special contribution from Varanasi to the field of music, like the Chaiti of Mirzapur or *Holi* of Vindhyachal. For a long time, it was customary for local women, including professional dancing girls dressed in cloud-coloured clothes to sing Kajri during large fairs in the rainy season.

Varanasi has also a rich tradition of Tappa. The chief disciple of Shori Mian, the famous Tappa singer, Mian Gammu, and his son and disciple, Shadey Khan, who belonged to the *darbar* of Maharaja Uditnarain, resided

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here for a long time on account of which the culture of Tappa was in vogue in this area. He trained two tawaifs, Chitra Bai and Imambandi, in Tappa, who later turned out to be two of the greatest Tappa singers. It was due to their influence, especially that of Chitra Bai, that the culture of Tappa grew here and neighbouring areas. Imambandi's Hindustani Tappa deeply influenced Bengal's Tappa tradition.

Varanasi evolved its own style of Tabla playing and the Tabla gharana of the City, known as *Banaras baaj*, has been given special recognition in the world of music. The Varanasi school of Shehnai is similarly distinguished and well known, with most of the distinguished Shehnai players of India based in Varanasi.

The tawaifs or *baijees* living in the Dal ki Mandi area played an important role in the field of music of Varanasi. From the eighteenth century onward, dancers of the City, especially the female artistes who were of the finest order, enjoyed a great reputation across the whole of India.

The above survey suggests that in Varanasi all three major branches of music, vocal, instrumental and dance, were in full swing during the whole of the eighteenth and ninetenth centuries. Again, almost all types of songs and musical instruments were in vogue here. Among the various types of songs there were Dhrupad, Dhamar, Telena, Khayal, Tappa, Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal, Bhajan, Chaiti, Holi and Kajri. Folk style songs, generally sung by common people,[8] included *Biraha, Kawali, Purvi, Khemta, Lavani*, and *Jhula*. This also shows that along with the culture of classical and semi-classical songs, popular types of songs were also common in Varanasi. Some of the musical traditions of different provinces were also introduced in the City during this period, for example the *Garba* of Gujarat, *Bhangra* of Punjab, and *Kirtan* of Bengal. Among sophisticated musical instruments there were the *Veena, Sitar, Sarod, Sarangi, Shehnai, Pakhawaj, Tabla,* etc.[9] Again, among the popular types of instruments there were the *Turi, Bheri, Tikara, Damama, Jharjhari*, etc.[10] Dances current in the City included the *Katthak* and the *Muslim Darbari*, as well as various types of popular dance.

In addition to the continuation of traditional gharanas (Schools of music), new gharanas of both vocal and instrumental music, especially Dhrupad and Tabla, emerged during this period.[11]

In and around Varanasi were two sects of traditional professional musicians, the *Gandharvas* and the *Kathaks*, who devoted themselves

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fully to music by learning, teaching and performing. Like for many musicians elsewhere, music was not merely a profession and a means to earn a living to them, it was their very lifeblood. There were also the tawaifs, who, though devoted to music, primarily considered music as a profession. Among the musicians of Varanasi there were both Hindus and Muslims, male and female, though, of course, there were more Hindu musicians than Muslim. Musicians had migrated here from other places, as there were others who originally lived in Varanasi but had permanently or temporarily migrated to other places. *Banaras Gharana ke Ustad*, meaning one who belongs to the Varanasi school of music, became a common epithet that these musicians would bear with pride and joy, as well as one that would earn the admiration and respect of others.[12]

Some local musicians had sound theoretical knowledge of music, wrote monographs on music and composed songs. Moreover, besides professionals, there were a good number of amateur musicians who were no less proficient and celebrated in the field of music.

The City attracted music students from different parts of India and local musicians were ready to teach them. Thus, Varanasi also developed as a centre of the study of music where learning and teaching went on in full swing, which becomes evident from the study of the various gharanas of this place.[13]

It deserves special mention that, despite a strong feeling of communalism between the Hindus and Muslims of Varanasi, music was one area that was comparatively free of this. Rather, upon this platform both the Hindu and Muslim musicians, as well as the lovers of music, mixed freely. Examples are not rare where the musicians of one community taught or learned music to or from musicians of the other community. Again, Muslim musicians often performed their art on auspicious Hindu occasions or in holy places like Hindu temples. But with few exceptions[14] (e.g., Ashiq Husain, who learnt Katthak from Gopal, or Kallu Mian, who learnt Tabla from Durgasahay), Hindus had more Muslim preceptors here than viceversa.

In the development of any branch of art, such as music, a vital factor is a suitable atmosphere in which one's creative ability can manifest itself freely. With Shiva, the fountain-head of music being the City's presiding deity, the multi-dimensional, colourful, carefree and joyous life of the City must have provided an excellent environment for music to flourish. The security of life and property of the residents during British rule made

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Varanasi a much-desired place to reside, including men of riches and of an artistic bent.

Among the rich and aristocrats were many connoisseurs of music who patronized musicians. Mir Rustam Ali, the Governor of Varanasi, and almost all in the line of the Kashi Naresh, beginning with Balwant Singh, were lovers and patrons of music. Consequently, the royal court of Varanasi became a haunt of many illustrious musicians and it grew as a prominent seat of music over a considerable period of time. Deported kings and princes from different places of India, for example the Mughal Princes and other chieftains who settled in the City in the nineteenth century at the instance of the British Government, brought with them their court-musicians. This contributed largely towards enriching the music of Varanasi.

Another factor which had contributed to the development of music in Varanasi was the impact of music centres of the neighbouring states of Bengal and Bihar. As the British Government devised land reforms, wealthy *zamindars* emerged in those regions. These zamindars, some of whom were great musicians in their own right, offered benevolent shelter to displaced musicians from far and near, and thus became responsible for the flourishing of various music centres.

Apart from private music recitals where admission was reserved, there were occasional public performances. The *Budhwamangal*, or boat-festival, when vocal, instrumental and dance artists performed on boats in the Ganga in the presence of the multitudes, was, for instance, the finest example of public performance. Music also formed the integral part of a number of fairs and festivals, such as *Holi, Ramlila, Shivaratri Mela, Vijaya Dashami Mela* and *Kajri Tij Mela*.[15] All these intensified the culture of music in the City.

Now let us discuss the roles of different sectors of the musical world of Varanasi.

CLASSICAL MUSIC : PATRONS

The Governor and the Rajas

Mir Rustam Ali was a man of refined tastes, having a great interest in various branches of culture, especially music. He himself was a proficient singer and a patron of music. He used to take part in some Hindu festivals and thoroughly enjoyed them.[16]

Contributions of the present line of Varanasi kings to the field of music were substantial in the sense that not only were some of them great

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connoisseurs of music, and even proficient in it but, also, that all of them, from Balwant Singh down to Prabhunarain Singh, patronized music by appointing court-musicians in their palace at Ramnagar Fort.[17]

The musicians who ornamented the court of the rajas of Varanasi include Chaturbihari Mishra, Jagraj Das Sukul, and Khuslal Khan during Raja Balwant Singh's tenure, and Dulari Bai, Kishori Bai, Kajjan Bai, Rukmimi Bai and Chhittan Bai during Raja Chet Singh's tenure. Chet Singh was himself a maestro and composer of music. During Mahipnarain's reign, Jivan Shah and Pyare Khan, sons of Bhupat Khan who belonged to the line of the daughter of Tansen, the most celebrated musician of Mediaeval India, and, hence, were called *Senia Gharana*, left the Mughal court and, finally, ornamented the court of the Varanasi kings. During Uditnarain's period, music reached its zenith in the Varanasi court. The names and other details of his court-musicians are as follows :

Nirmal Shah, was the son of Jivan Shah, the illustrious musician; Umrao Khan, the son-in-law of Nirmal Shah, was a great Veena player. Jafar Khan, Pyare Khan, and Basat Khan, all descendants of Vilas Khan, the son of Tansen, came to the City in the early part of their lives and settled in Kabir Chaura. They became court-musicians to Uditnarain and were proficient in both *Rabav* and Dhrupad and stuck to *Gandhar Bani* (*Gobarhar*) of the Dhrupad. Gammu Mian, a disciple of Shori Mian, was proficient in Tappa. Barqatullah Khan also belonged to the Senia Gharana and was a Veena, Rabav and *Surashringar* maestro.

Jafar Khan, Pyare Khan and Basat Khan who had already come to the royal court of Varanasi continued to stay there during the period of Raja Ishwarinarain also. Pandit Shivdasji and Pandit Prayagji,[18] proficient in both song and Veena, became Ishwarinarain's court musicians. Sadiq Ali and Nisar Ali also belonged to the Senia Gharana, and were sons of Jafar Khan. Sadiq Ali, also a great theoretician of music, taught the Rabav to his brother and the Veena and singing to his disciples among whom Mahesh Chandra Sarkar and Mithailal became the most illustrious.[19]

Deported Chiefs

As we have already noted, during the nineteenth century many Indian chiefs, who had suffered defeat at the hands of the British, were brought to Varanasi and kept under strict surveillance. Along with these deposed chiefs and other chiefs who migrated here (for example, Jahandar Shah II, Peshwa Amrita Rao, Raja of Satara, the chiefs of Nepal, Coorg, and Tonk)

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some of their near relatives and staff, including court-musicians, also moved to Varanasi. To name a few accompanying Jahandar Shah II (Jawan Bakht) of Delhi who was given accommodation in Chet Singh's palace at Shivala Ghat, there were Waris Ali Khan (Veena), Akbar Ali (Tappa), Nisar Ali (Dhrupad) and Sadiq Ali (Khayal). Thus, the City witnessed a constellation of celebrated musicians coming from all over India which, along with other circumstances, gave Varanasi an exalted position in the world of Indian music during the nineteenth century.

The Rais[20]

Among local aristocrats there were both lovers of music and musicians. To have taste in music and to arrange *mehfils* (music programmes) were traits of the aristocracy. Such mehfils were attended not only by these aristocrats but sometimes by the public as well. Again, some aristocrats had musicians on their regular staff for their own entertainment with relatives and friends. Among the *rais* who patronized the musicians, the names of Lallan (Rai Bate Krishna) and Chhakkan (Rai Shyam Krishna) may be specially mentioned.

PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS

The Kathaks

The *Kathaks* of Varanasi were hereditary musicians. Their original home was Rajasthan from where some branches migrated to different places, namely, Delhi, Punjab, Lucknow, etc. The Lucknow branch was reported to have migrated to Varanasi during the mediaeval period.[21] In Varanasi, musicians of this branch lived mainly in the Kabir Chaura Ward, but were also found in Piyari, Chahnama and Ramapura. According to Prinsep's census of 1829, there were 118 of them. There was also another caste of hereditary musicians called *Gandharvas*, who lived in the villages of the Varanasi District. Persons belonging to other castes, yet were devoted to music and lived with the Kathaks and the Gandharvas, were also called Kathaks and Gandharvas. The contributions of the Kathaks to the musical world of Varanasi were outstanding, and it was this class which formed the nucleus of the Banarasi school of music over a long period. References to some Kathak musicians now follow :

Hariprasad (better known as Prasaddhu), Manohar and Vishweshwar were three brothers whose father was Thakurdayal Mishra. Thakurdayal was a disciple of the Sadarang-Adarang of Varanasi, the famous founders

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of a Khayal gharana. Hariprasad and Manohar sang in duet and earned a great reputation. They established a gharana, the details of which will be taken up later on, and were appointed the court-singers in the *darbar* of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan of Oudh. Once Bahadur Shah, the last Emperor of Delhi, having heard of their talents invited them to Delhi to teach him music. There the two brothers often enchanted audiences with their extraordinary performances, as they once had done in a musical *soiree* organized by the Maharaja of Patiala.[22] Hariprasad and Manohar later migrated to Nepal as court-singers to the king of Nepal.

Shiva and Pashupati were two brothers who belonged to the line of Manohar and Hariprasad, and the field of their specialization was Dhrupad. Their programmes would leave such a powerful impact on all present that contemporary singers used to call them *Rakshasas* (demons with extraordinary power).

Ramsevak Mishra and Ramkrishna Mishra were the sons of Shivasevak and they themselves were celebrated singers.

Kathaks also were proficient in instrumental music, for example, Jattan, a Kathak by caste, was a famous player of the Sarangi.

The Tawaifs

Most tawaifs were Hindu women and were divided into three classes: Gandharva, Ramjani and Gaunharin.[23] Devoted to music, Gandharva women were usually attached to one man only. The Ramjanis, originally high-caste Hindus that were forced to leave home under certain circumstances, would embrace music and dance as a profession. Gaunharins were generally low caste Hindus who, having left home, would also take up music as a profession. Some of these women led independent lives and maintained themselves with incomes from music only. But there were others who were employed as concubines and/or court-musicians by their patrons. There were still others who led a life of prostitution. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that these women musicians and dancers made a substantial contribution to the music centre of Varanasi. Furthermore, on certain occasions, such as the worship of the Ganga, the songs of these women formed an essential part of the rituals.

Fees were taken by tawaifs for performing, excepting in certain religious places and on certain occasions that were attended by commoners.[24] They sang free in the *akhaḍa* of Sadhu Kinaram, in the

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Vagishwari Temple on the occasion of Saraswati Puja, in front of the Shitala Temple in the month of Chaitra, near Panchaganga Ghat in the month of *Kartik*, in the akhaḍa of Naga Baba near Gai Ghat, near the Kali Temple on the Dashashwamedh Ghat; and also on the various ghats of the Ganga during worship of the river.

Among the host of tawaifs whose names are recorded during this period,[25] Janaki Bai was a renowned exponent of different branches of vocal music and dance. Another, Jinnat, lived in the first half of the nineteeth century and was proficient in the song and dance that was much appreciated in that era. Gulbadan and Sukhbadan lived in the mid-nineteenth century and were proficient in Thumri, Ghazal and dance. Husna Bai was proficient in Khayal, Thumri, Dadra and dance. Saraswati Bai was proficient in Dhrupad and other branches of vocal music. Toukhi, Ganna and Banno were proficient in Khayal. Baḍi Maina and Chhoti Maina had proficiency in different types of song and dance. Chanda, Shivkuwar and Jauhari were expert in Khayal and other types of song and dance. Colonel Auli was proficient in Khayal, Thumri and other types of song. Chandravali, Bhagawati and Tara were proficient in music, but other details about them are unknown. Baḍi Moti was proficient in Khayal, Tappa and Thumri. Vidyadhari and Rati were proficient in Khayal and Thumri. Rajeshwari Bai, the grand daughter of Rati Bai, was expert in Khayal, Thumri, Ghazal, Chaiti and Kajri. Baḍi Saraswati was proficient in Thumri, Tappa and Kajri.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS[26]

A catalogue of miscellaneous other professional musicians in the City, whose names have not been mentioned earlier, now follows by category :

Vocal

Tappa

Chitra Bai and Imambadi Bai were disciples of Shadey Khan, the court-singer of Raja Uditnarain; Ramjan Khan, was the son of Imambadi Khan; Nagendranath Bhattacharya, a disciple of Imambadi, introduced Tappa in Bengal; Kali Mirza (Kalidas Chattopadhyay),[27] born in Bengal in 1750, came to Varanasi for his studies as well as learning music during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. He returned to Bengal after the completion of his studies and was a vocalist and especially proficient in Tappa. In 1820, Kali Mirza returned to Varanasi late in life,

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where he performed at different places including the court of Raja Uditnarain.*

Thumri

Jagadipji was a famous Thumri singer and his patrons were Lallan, Chhakkan, and Moujuddin Khan.

Instrumental[28]

Shehnai

Ahammad Ali Nakkarchi, Baḍa Mian and Rajjab Mian, who played Shehnai in the temple built by Peshwa Balaji, and Babulal (the grandfather of Nandalal, the great Shehnai player of Varanasi in a later period).

Tabla

Ramsahay originated a special style of Tabla playing which became familiar as *Banaras Baaj* (details given later); Pandit Bhairavsahay, a disciple and nephew of Ramsahay, also learnt Tabla from Bhagat Maharaj; Pandit Maulviram Mishra was the disciple of Bhairavprasad, but he also learned Tabla from his father, Bihari Lal Mishra, who was the court musician of the Kashi Naresh. Other reputed Tabla players included, Baldev Sahay, Jagannath, Mahavir, Baiju, Gokul, Vishwanath, Pandit Pratap Maharaj, Jagannath and Shivsundar.

Dance

Like vocal and instrumental music, Indian dance also has three broad divisions, classical, semi-classical and popular, including folk. Classical and semi-classical dances were usually performed in selected places and in front of chosen audiences. But popular dances were performed at fairs and on occasions like Kajri or Holi, sometimes featuring folk-dances of a given province, the Garba of Gujarat or the Bhangra of Punjab for example. Like vocal and instrumental music, classical dance in India has also been guided by the principles propounded by the sage-musician Bharata of ancient India. Thus, classical dance, too, unfolded from an unfailing spiritual consciousness. But the school of dance that developed in the Muslim courts of the Middle Ages had erotic touches. The special type of classical dance which had developed in the City was known as Katthak.

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* For details, see Chapter XVI.

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The dancers of Varanasi were of both sexes, but more than others, the Gandharvas as a class devoted themselves more to dancing than to vocal and instrumental music and exhibited their special proficiency in the field of Katthak dance.

Unlike in South India, the custom of dancing girls being attached to temples was not at all common in North India, though there were a few cases of this. It was narrated by one traveller that some of the temples of Varanasi maintained dancing girls to perform at religious processions and festivals. It was reported that though the conduct of these ladies was not always immaculate, they were not held in less esteem on that account, since theirs was a sacred calling.[29] That dance was performed in the temple in the evening to please the deity becomes evident from the detailed description of the worship of Lord Vishwanatha, the presiding deity of the City.[30]

AMATEUR MUSICIANS[31]

Among amateur artists, there were mostly Maharashtrian and Bengalee musicians because of the large number of Maharashtrian and Bengalee settlers in Varanasi in this period. There were both male and female amateur singers in different branches of music. Many of these musicians had other sources of income and they took up music out of love.

Aghor Chakravarti was a Bengalee by birth and a great Dhrupad singer who had a large number of disciples, namely Upendra, Suren (Ganguly), Harinarayan Mukherjee, Prankrishna Chatterjee and Rakhal, who were also Bengalees. Other Dhrupad singers who probably belonged to this period (or possibly a little later) included, Venimadhab Bhatta, Pandit Tryambak Shastri, Babunandan Vaidya, Jaykaran, Shyamsundar Mishra, Nagendra Bhattacharya, Vishwanath Prasad Mishra, Pranchandra Dev, Ramaboba Bhave, Bhaiyaji Lande, Pandit Gangadhar Bera and Chand Barkar.

Other amateur vocalists include : Narayan Bhatji, a scholar of the Vedas and also proficient in Dhrupad and Khayal; Pandit Tirolkar, also a scholar of the Vedas and a great singer of the old *padas*; Somnath Balure and Sobhnath Gankar, who were disciples of Bhaiyaji Lande; Madhab Bhatta Sapre, Haribhau Sapre, Ghorh Bhaiya and Ganpat Rao Phadke, who in addition to being expert singers, were players of the Harmonium; Rambhau; Dhiren and Basanta were proficient in Thumri; Mohini, Indi, Nirmala, Arun and Hira Bai were all female singers; Lalbaba of Gopal

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Mandir was a monk and a great player of *Pakhawaj*;[32] Mahesh Chandra Sarkar, a Bengalee, was an illustrious Veena player.*

POPULAR MUSIC

Vocal

Kajri/Kajli Song : This was generally sung by the women during the rainy season and in different quarters of the City. These songs, basically folk poetry, were composed by renowned writers such as Bharatendu Harishchandra of Kashi, Premaghan of Mirzapur and others.[33] Among the famous singers of Kajri there were Baḍi Maina, Toubhi Bai, Husna Bai, Jagdip, Moujuddin Khan, Shiva-Pashupati and Baḍe Ramdas.[34]

An example of Kajri song written by Ramdas is as follows :[35]

हरि बिन जियरा मेरो तरेसैं
बदरा बरसे घनघोर।
रुमझम वादल नभ आये
चहुँदिसों बोलत बनमोर।
वैठीं रैन विहाय सोच में
तड़प तड़प ही भोर।
पावन बीती जानु श्याम
अव आओ भवन बहोर।
आओ श्याम उर सोच
मिटाओ लागूँ पैया तोर।
रामदास हरिहि मनाय
बिनय करत करजोर !

My heart is aching without Hari.
It is raining heavily.
The dark clouds have gathered in the sky.
Rejoicing peacocks are heard in the wild.
I have passed the night in anguish—
Restless in the absence of Shyam,
Morning seemed so far away.
The rainy season is passing.
Now come to my house, O Shyam !
I bow at your feet, please do come.
The agony of my heart will be relieved.
Ramdas, longing to please Hari,
Implores him with folded hands.

Dance

The popular form of dance in the City was simple and unostentatious in style. This type of dance drew inspiration more from the Islamic tradition than from the Hindu. Generally, the Gaunharins were proficient in popular dance and were hired to perform on certain religious or social occasions and during fairs and festivals.

GHARANAS OR SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

Gharana, in Hindi, means a school or tradition of music, painting, etc.

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* For details on Mahesh Chandra Sarkar, see Chapter XVI—The Bengalees and Varanasi.

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From the last phase of the mediaeval period, the tradition of gharana has occupied an important place in the history of Indian music.[36] These gharanas originated as a corollary to the system of learning music from a preceptor and also preserving a specific tradition.

One of the limitations of the gharana system was that the culture of music was confined to a limited circle and opportunities to learn were not available to all students. In addition to this, owing to the conservatism of many *gharanedars*, their gharanas ceased to exist after their death.[37] On the other hand, the advantage of this system was that by being confined to certain qualified groups, purity of a given musical tradition was maintained and high standards were retained.[38]

In Varanasi the following gharanas of music were famous for their style, proficiency, tradition and number of followers :

Vocal

The *Senia Gharana* :

The founder of this gharana was Tansen, the legendary musician who was originally a Hindu, but was later on converted into Islam. The successors to Tansen preserved the musical tradition left by their great ancestor and developed the same further. They spread in different parts of India and carried with them the musical tradition of the family. Jivan Shah, Pyare Khan, Jafar Khan, another Pyare Khan and Basat Khan, all belonging to the Senia Gharana, settled in Varanasi. They and Jafar Khan's son, Sadik Ali Khan, and brother, Nisar Ali Khan, were all court-musicians to the Rajas of Varanasi.[39]

The *Mishra Gharana* :[40]

The Mishra Gharana of Varanasi, well established by the second half of the nineteenth century, gradually became a renowned musical family of India. This gharana claims to have a long history of about four hundred years in Varanasi and was named after the two brothers of the family, Hariprasad Mishra and Manohar Mishra. Of the two, the younger Hariprasad was the more proficient and famous and came to be known as Prasaddhu.

In course of time, the *Prasaddhu-Manohar Gharana* expanded greatly and was honoured with recognition by the music world of India. Among the sons of Manohar and Hariprasad, Ramkumar, Shivasahay and Ramsevak, stood out as worthy successors, and with this group of well-trained disciples, the Gharana began to flourish more and more. A kind of

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school was started in the field of different types of vocal and instrumental music, where the traditions of the Prasaddhu-Manohar Gharana were followed for about a century and a half.

To its credit, this Gharana made the following achievements : First, they had extraordinary skill and practice in *taladhyaya*. In the skilfulness of *tala* (rhythm) and *laya* (tempo), the Prasaddhu-Manohar Gharana was one of the leading names. The best artistes of this gharana were unparalleled in India for their skill in composing subtle tempos (laya) and their hair-splitting technique of playing even a fraction of a *matra* (unit of division in musical measure). Versatility was another achievement and with proficiency in both vocal and instrumental music, they were skilled in different styles of singing like Dhurpad, Khayal, Tappa, Thumri, Dadra, etc., and also at playing instruments such as the Veena, Sitar, Pakhawaj, Tabla, etc. These two achievements were displayed by the great exponents of this Gharana, including Ramkumar, Lachhmiprasad, Haridas, Ramsevak, Pashupatisevak, Shivasevak and other great talents, who all set standards in *layakari* and versatility.

Manohar and Hariprasad were born, had their training in music, and started their musical careers all at Varanasi. Their father, Jagamohan Mishra, had also learnt music in this City. The Mishra family, however, was not originally resident of Varanasi, but hailed from Balarampur of the United Province. Dilaram Mishra, the grandfather of Manohar and Hariprasad, had seven brothers, all living in Balarampur; one, the head of a local monastery in Balarampur, was slain in an attack. Dilaram and his five surviving brothers, who were all Vaishnavas, then left Balarampur to live at Vrindavan, a pilgrim centre of the Vaishnavas as well as a centre of music. At Vrindavan, they began to study music and learned *Vishnupada* and *Dhruvapada* music in the style of Haribans Chaurasi. After studying music for a long time, Dilaram Mishra, who became famous as Sevak, was the first to migrate to Varanasi. His brothers, having taken up music as a profession as well, also left Vrindavan and went off to different parts of India. In Varanasi, Jagman (Jagmohan?) Mishra studied Dhruvapada and Vishnupada music from his father. Thakurdas, the son of Jagman, inherited this legacy of music in Varanasi from his family early in life, but during his stays at other places he also received instruction from some of Tansen's descendants.

After a long period of single-minded devotion to music, Thakurdas married at an advanced age and had three sons; Manohar, Hariprasad and

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Vishweshwar. All were born in Varanasi (Senpura Mahalla) and studied music with their father, but of the three, Prasaddhu (Hariprasad) was the most talented. Besides this family learning, Prasaddhu also received training in Tappa in the style of Hamdun, the disciple of Shori Mian, and he was the first to add Tappa singing to this Gharana.

From the time of Prasaddhu and Manohar, this family became famous in the field of music even outside Varanasi and its name began to be uttered together in different music centres of North India. In *darbars* and music conferences, the Mishra brothers exhibited their extraordinary talents and they were attached to the darbars of Nepal, Patiala and Lucknow at different times. It is said that during the reign of Nawab Wazid Ali Shah of Lucknow, even among more than hundreds of accomplished artistes, they were marked with distinction.

Though Manohar and Prasaddhu were experienced in Dhrupad, etc., their fame grew as Khayal singers. They were sincere co-workers in musical life and would be employed together in different darbars, and at musical conferences and assemblies they also sang duets. Following the example of this joint musical endeavour, this family's later custom of duet singing had its beginnings.

At the Nepal Darbar Prasaddhu stayed for a longer time, where he received the title of 'Sangeet-Nayak'. Once, while Manohar, Hariprasad and Vishweshwar were at the durbar of the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah in Delhi, Vishweshwar utilized this stay to learn Sitar, probably from Raja Khan. Thus, Sitar playing was also introduced in the Mishra family.

Artistes from different music centres were once invited to a grand music conference at Patiala and in a competition that followed, Prasaddhu was adjudged the best. He was awarded many prizes and became patronized by the Maharajas of the different Punjab states; Nava, Karpurthala, Patiala, Sialkote, etc. Among the other darbars where Prasaddhu presented his music, the darbar of Punjab Keshari Ranjit Singh and the Nagpur Darbar of the Bhonslas were most remarkable.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Manohar and Prasaddhu established contact with Calcutta, the British capital of India. Consequently, this Gharana influenced the field of Bengal music considerably and built its own tradition which has continued till recent times.

Ramkumar Mishra, the eldest son of Manohar, had learnt music mainly from his father, but he had also received some training from his uncle, Prasaddhu. Ramkumar's talent was versatile as he was proficient in both

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vocal and instrumental music. He showed his talents in singing Dhrupad, Dhamar, Khayal and Tappa and also playing the Veena, Tabla, Sitar and *Surbahar*. He, widely known as a sweet-voiced singer, was also a preceptor.

In his professional life, Ramkumar spent the first fourteen years in Nepal in company with the son of the Prime Minister of Nepal. Owing to poor health he then came to Calcutta, where his main patron was Raja Cally Kissen Tagore. Here Ramkumar remained attached to the Sangeet Sabha (musical assembly) of Cally Kissen till his last days. In Bengal, Ramkumar Mishra was remembered more as a preceptor of music than as a singer, and among his numerous Bengalee disciples, the most renowned include Mahesh Chandra Mukhopadhyay, Madhusudan Bandopadhyay, Hitendranath, and Pratibha Devi.

While Prasaddhu was living in Varanasi, the musical training of his two talented sons, Shivasahay and Ramsevak, continued under his guidance. Other famous Mishra brothers and relatives of Prasaddhu, Shivnarayan and Guruprasad, were also said to have learnt music from him.

Both Shivasahay and Ramsevak spent much of their life in Bengal, but the elder Shivasahay, had a greater impact on the musicians of Bengal. He inherited a wealth of Tappa songs in the tradition of Hamdun from his father and became an expert in this style of singing. His contribution to the field of music in Bengal lay in producing two of the leading Bengali Tappa singers, Maheshchandra Mukhopadhyay and Madhusudan Bandopadhyay, who had received training also from Ramkumar Mishra.

Ramsevak, the younger brother of Shivasahay, was proficient in Khayal and was regarded as one of the best Khayal singers in India. Moreover, he was a well-trained player of the Sitar and Tabla. He was also a Dhrupad singer in his Gharana style. Though he was trained under his father, he also received additional training from outside the family circle and enriched his own Gharana by the Tabla, Surbahar and Sitar from other teachers.

Ramsevak also lived in Calcutta for a long time and taught music in Raja Saurindramohan Tagore's music school, but in reality no Bengali student was trained in his Gharana. While employed at a Nepal Darbar, he taught music in the royal family and was head of the music department of the court. He passed away in Varanasi at age 77.

Like Manohar and Prasaddhu, their ancestors, Ramsevak's sons, Pashupatisevak and Shivasevak, were also a musical duo. In view of their

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appearance at functions as a duet, the two were referred to as Shiva-Pashupati. Born in Nepal, their training in music began there from very childhood. Though both of them learned from Ramsevak, their father, Shivsevak had additional training from his elder brother Pashupatisevak. In the later part of their lives, both received training also from sources outside the family. Pashupati studied the Pakhawaj under Ayodhyaprasad, the grandson of the renowned Pakhawaj player Kadau Singh, and the Veena from the noted Veena player Muhammad Husain of Bansbereli. He also received training in the Sitar and Surbahar from his father. In Nepal, Shivasevak learned *Tap-Khayal* from Enayet Husain Khan, the famous Tap-Khayal singer. The style developed under all these influences formed the basis of Shiva-Pashupati's musical life and their own Gharana.

Both brothers were honoured in the world of music for their versatility. Pashupatisevak was an expert Sitar, Surbahar and Veena player. Also a Dhrupad singer, he had a rich collection of Khayal, Tappa, and Holi songs and had perfect mastery over these modes. Shivasevak was mainly a singer and expert in Dhrupad, Khayal and Holi songs. He was rightly honoured with the title of *Sangeetacharya*, or Master Musician, and a gold medal by Raja Sitaram Bhupal of Keshavnagar state in Hyderabad. Based in Varanasi, Pashupatisevak and Shivasevak had wide popularity as musicians in Calcutta too. There they lived intermittently and developed and nurtured a group of disciples.

The family[41] and disciple[42] tree of this school, placed in the Appendix, may be studied for further information on this Gharana.

The *Mishra Gharana* of Shivananda :

Four important members of this Gharana were Shivananda Mishra, his son, Baḍe Ramdas, Dwarkaprasad Mishra and Suryasahay Mishra. For other members, the family tree[43] of this school may be consulted.

Vocal and Instrumental

The *Mishra Gharana* of Buddhu :[44]

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the musical school of Mishra Gharana was founded by Buddhu Mishra, a noted singer and Sarangi player. Later on, a kinship was established between the Prasaddhu-Manohar Gharana and the Mishra family of Buddhu, being strengthened further by a musical relationship between them at certain levels. The Buddhu Mishra Gharana was noted in musical society for its special culture of Sarangi playing and Khayal and Tappa songs.

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There was an extensive culture of Sarangi playing and performing at Varanasi in the nineteenth century. Buddhu Mishra introduced a style of rendering Tappa Songs together with the playing of the Sarangi, which distinguished him and his Gharana. The tradition of Sarangi playing together with vocal music was preserved and continued in this family up to the third or fourth generation. And from the third generation, or from the time of Buddhu Mishra's grandson, Tabla playing was also added to this Gharana. Thus, talented Tabla players also emerged from this family.

As Sarangi players, these *gharanedars* were mainly accompanists for singers, but certain members of the Mishra family earned all-India fame solely as Sarangi players. For example, Ustad Gaurishankar Mishra exhibited extraordinary skill in solo Sarangi recitals. At a performance in Delhi, a competition took place between the renowned Sarangi player Manman Khan and Gaurishankar wherein Gaurishankar's excellence in playing the Sarangi far surpassed that of the former. The skill of this Gharana at playing the Sarangi in Tappa style was widely recognized and was attached with special importance.

The paternal house of Buddhu Mishra, the first musical genius of this family, was at Ramnagar, situated on the other side of Varanasi. It was not known from whom he received his musical training, but he became renowned as a professional singer and Sarangi player when he was middle-aged. He then bought a house in the Kabir Chaura Mahalla of Varanasi where he lived until passing away. Incidentally, the Kabir Chaura area housed many a talented musician of the City in the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century. Buddhu Mishra's house, which was located behind Kabir Temple, became a meeting place for local musicians later on. The other concentration of the Mishra Gharanas has been in the Ramapura Mahalla of Varanasi. Buddhu Mishra trained his two sons, Bechu Ustad and Thakurprasad, in vocal music and Sarangi playing. Whether he had disciples other than these two is not known.

In the second phase of this Gharana, the two brothers, Bechu Ustad and Thakurprasad, became established as artistes of the first order in both vocal and instrumental (Sarangi) music. The younger, Thakurprasad, emerged in the music centre of Varanasi as one of its leading artistes. Ramdas, the famous singer, was his disciple and Husna Bai, one of the best female vocalists of the time, also studied under him. Besides these, Pannalal and many other male and female artistes of Varanasi also took music lessons from him. The elder, Bechu Ustad,

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became a celebrity as a vocal artiste and, thus, the title of *Ustad* was attached to his name.

Bechu Ustad later migrated to Calcutta where he lived till his last and became well known as a singer, Sarangi player and a music teacher. The female singer, Gauharjan, received musical training under him. As Gauharjan was a *baiji* renowned across the whole of India, Bechu Ustad, as her preceptor, also became well known and was treated with respect in the music world. He died at the ripe old age of eighty-two in the first part of the twentieth century. His sons continued the musical tradition of this family and became famous as musicians in Bengal, the details of which have been dealt with in the chapter on Bengalees in Varanasi.

Thakurprasad, the younger brother of Bechu Ustad, however, stayed at Varanasi till his demise. He had no sons, so it was through his disciples that his Gharana survived. Thakurprasad was a Sarangi player and a singer, but his students were only vocalists. Sarangi playing of the Mishra Gharana continued and gained further momentum during the tenure of Bechu Ustad's two sons, Gaurishankar and Kalicharan by name. The family tree[45] of this school has been given in the Appendix.

Shivdasji and *Prayagji Gharana* :[46]

These musicians learned music from their maternal uncle Ramprasad Mishra. They had proficiency in both vocal music and the Veena and were appointed *darbar* musicians of Maharaja Ishwarinarain.

Instrumental

Tabla

Ramsahay Gharana :

There were numerous gharanas of Tabla in the City, but the most illustrious of them was the Ramsahay Gharana.[47] The custom of Banaras-*baaj* (style) in the field of Tabla playing was founded in Varanasi in the middle of the nineteenth century by Ramsahay, the originator of Banaras-baaj. This developed into a distinct local style that earned an all-India fame and at the root of its popularity was the singular contribution of Ramsahay. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, of all Tabla maestros who became famous for proficiency in Banaras-baaj, Ramsahay was the *adi-guru* (the preceptor who starts a line). These famous maestros included Bhagatji, Bhairavprasad, Baldeo Sahay, Anokhelal, Bachcha Mishra and Kanthe Maharaj.

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A condition of the foundation of a Gharana demands the invention of some original or distinct style in the performance of music. This is applicable to the case of the Banaras-baaj also. In this style of Tabla playing, among certain other characteristics, the predominance of *khuli awaz*, or freeness of sound, is a notable feature. In addition to the freeness of sound, this Gharana was also marked by the strength of its *bol* (monosyllabic names representing the different strokes on the Tabla). There is so much work on *bayan* (the drum played with the left hand) that the sound of the bayan remains a continuous tone. The use of bols like *dha dhi nara*, *kri dhi nara*, etc., is the most prominent feature of Banaras-baaj, as there is much use of bols like *dhira dhira* in Tabla Gharanas of Lucknow. In Varanasi Tabla there is much work of tone and extraordinary variety in the function of *kinar* or the main accompanying drum on the right side.

Another main characteristic of this Gharana is the skilful use of *tukras* in four, eight and more *matras* (time units) in *paran*, *ladi*, *chhanda,* etc., with *alamkara* (melodic ornament). Besides this, the different bols of Pakhawaj applied to this style produce sounds similar to the thunderclap-like beats of a *Mridanga*. Playing Tabla to accompany Dhrupad songs was another achievement of this Gharana. On the other hand, the accompaniment of Tabla with the traditional dance forms like Katthak, etc., also flourished, as a rule, in Banaras Gharana. But in this case, by following the example of Lucknow Gharana, it became possible to accompany the *tora*, etc., of dancing. In the practice of local Tabla Gharana, there was another trait which became one of its great traditions. This is the recitation of different prayers to gods and goddesses, in the forms of *kabita*, *mantra* and *chhanda* in Sanskrit by the Tabla player and the playing of bols following all the sounds uttered in the recitation. Due to these various original elements, Banaras-baaj acquired a distinct place in the world of Indian music. Now follows the story of the origins of Banaras-baaj.

Ramsahay's paternal house was at the Kabir Chaura Mahalla where he was born in 1830, and where, as mentioned before, most of Varanasi's musical celebrities lived. Here, behind the house of the famous Tabla maestro of a later period, Kanthe Maharaj, lived the Ramsahay family though the original family home was at the village of Gopalpur in Jaunpur, from where the Ramsahays migrated to Varanasi. The Tabla had been in vogue in the family long before Ramsahay's birth, as we have said Ramsahay's uncle was a Tabla player.

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From his very childhood, Ramsahay showed signs of a unique talent for the Tabla. With his tender palms he played bols like *dha dha ti*, *dha dha tin na*, etc. Thus, out of a natural urge the child started to play the Tabla. At five, when he started learning Tabla methodically from his uncle, he began to show far more ability than any student of his age and it soon became evident that Ramsahay possessed a rare genius in this field. The child prodigy acquired such skill and sense of *tala* (rhythm) and *laya* (tempo) that he began to play at music concerts in Varanasi with great confidence. By the age of nine, he had become such an expert at Tabla that he could easily accompany an Ustad.

At this time he met Mian Makhsu or Modu Khan of Lucknow, a Tabla maestro who heard the Tabla recital of the young Ramsahay at a music conference and was deeply impressed. He proposed to Ramsahay's guardians that he train Ramsahay and, his guardians having agreed, Ramsahay's training started under the tutorship of Modu Khan.

Modu Khan belonged to the Tabla Gharana of Lucknow and was the younger brother of Mian Bakhsu Khan, the founder of the Gharana. Unfortunately, Modu Khan was hardly recognized either in the musical society of Lucknow, or even in his own family, as he could not create any special impression by his performances. Moreover, he had no son, hence he had hardly any chance of training a successor and, thereby, exhibiting his excellence. Modu Khan's decision to teach Ramsahay was significant for another reason. At that time Ustads, while imparting formal training to disciples, usually would not give special training to any learner other than their own sons, son-in-laws or other close relatives.

However, even before coming into contact with Modu Khan, Ramsahay was already an accomplished Tabla player. Now receiving training from Modu Khan, he progressed very rapidly through his innate talent, coupled with untiring diligence and perseverance. Quite oblivious to the world outside, Ramsahay would practise eighteen to nineteen hours a day. A long period of ten to twelve years passed in this way until Ramsahay experienced a series of unexpected events that disrupted his training before it could be completed.

After the death of Nawab Amjad Ali Khan, Wazid Ali Shah became the Nawab of Lucknow in 1847. He was a generous patron of artistes in consequence of which the Lucknow Darbar became one of the greatest seats of music and dance during his time. Once it so happened that the Nawab arranged a week-long musical *soiree*. At his preceptor's prompting,

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Ramsahay also joined the soiree where a number of maestros in various branches of music were also present. At this grand function Ramsahay, then a youngster of about twenty years only, displayed his outstanding talents before the leading artistes of the day. All the artistes and the audience and the Nawab himself were simply charmed by his skill. At the conclusion of the programme the highly pleased Nawab gave the young Ramsahay an appropriate reward, including a precious pearl necklace, a bunch of silver coins and a silver elephant. But more than these, Ramsahay gained all-India recognition as a Tabla maestro at that Lucknow Darbar.

Quite unexpectedly, this unique incident had an adverse reaction on some quarters. Upon his success as an expert Tabla player, the friends and relations of his preceptor, Modu Khan, started criticizing Modu Khan for having a 'heretic' as a student. 'Why do you teach a pagan so many things ?' they complained. 'He should not be your only disciple. From him many more pagans will learn all these things !' Cornered by this criticism, Modu Khan became upset and fell into a dilemma, for what he had taught his disciple over this long period could not be taken back. At last, after much deliberation, he settled on a solution. Modu Khan then addressed Ramsahay, 'I have been teaching you so many things these years. Now give me my honorarium.' 'What honorarium shall I offer you, Ustad ?' Ramsahay asked with humility. Modu Khan then said, 'Promise me that you will never teach anyone else whatever you have learnt from me.'

The preceptor's words came like a bolt from the blue and Ramsahay was stunned at this command, but he kept his word and with a heavy heart agreed to the strange 'honorarium' his preceptor demanded. Modu Khan let the people know of Ramsahay's promise and thus saved himself from family disgrace. Ramsahay's life as a trainee came to an abrupt end in Lucknow. He left the place and returned to Varanasi with a feeling of dejection and unfulfilment. Nevertheless, he had already established himself as an expert Tabla accompanist with extraordinary talent, and by this success as an artist, he overcame the mortification he had suffered at Lucknow. He passed his days in practising Tabla regularly and took part in the concerts at different durbars and ceremonies.

Some time later, yet another incident that nearly brought about an end to his musical life took place. Once in a musical programme he was seated as a Tabla accompanist for a renowned singer, but before the song started the singer indicated that Ramsahay was only to play *theka* (basic rhythm)

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during the performance. Ramsahay never argued, as he had the dignity of a real artist, and he played only theka.

But he felt greatly insulted and grieved at heart that if he were to play only *theka* at these functions, what was the use of the vast knowledge he had acquired by so much hardship and what was the value of learning all his wealth of *bols* ? Moreover, in a programme of songs, the Tabla player does not only keep rhythm with the song, but his sense of *chhanda* also creates new beauty with various kinds of bols played to support the singing. So, he felt, if he could not have equal rank with the singers, he had no use for the life of a Tabla accompanist. Consequently, Ramsahay stopped playing Tabla completely as an accompanist and retired from the world of music when he was still in his thirties.

The music world of Varanasi was greatly shocked at the untimely retirement of such a great Tabla maestro. His admirers begged him earnestly not to cut his musical career short, but he expressed his dejection and said that he had no more attraction for the life of a Tabla player. Without losing hope, his admirers and well wishers appealed to him again and again saying, 'If you do not want to play yourself, then at least take some disciples. Instead of perishing with your vast knowledge, give it to some disciples. Let the wealth of your knowledge be preserved, and as an artist your life be more fulfilled'. Ramsahay pleaded his inability in this regard too, and being implored by all, plaintively told them about his promise to Modu Khan.

Someone then offered a new proposal to Ramsahay saying : 'Your Ustad forbade you to teach what he had given you in training. You also promised him the same. But besides his training is there nothing in your practice and devotion over these years that could be called yours ? Teach your disciples that only. Then there will be no breach of promise'. Everyone present began to support this proposal. Ramsahay, as well, deemed it quite logical and just and could not turn it down. He started thinking of new possibilities and his depressed mind was roused by new inspiration. With his creative talents thus unburdened, Ramsahay started to compose his own 'Sangat Prakaran' through focused meditation and superb artistic skill.

With various devices of permutation and combination, Ramsahay at last improvised a new style of Tabla playing which was quite different and independent from Modu Khan's style of playing. Hence with a free mind, he began to train disciples in this self-developed method and gradually, through these disciples, his style of Tabla playing won wide recognition.

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With the self-confidence of a great artiste conscious of his originality, Ramsahay said to his uncle, and first music-teacher, 'My style of playing will become familiar as the Banaras-baaj. ... This style can be an excellent accompaniment to Dhrupad, Khayal, Tappa and Thumri songs, Sitar and also dance. Banaras-baaj will prove to be a unique style of playing.' Indeed, the style introduced by Ramsahay was a wonderful new way of accompaniment. In his method, he took most of the beats from Pakhawaj and included some beats from *Tasa* and *Dholak*. Even from the beats of *Nakaḍa*, he created *Nakaḍa khani bol* which was played especially in the *laḍi* part. He utilized more playing of the companion *bayan* with the effect that it was, as it were, talking with beats that produced a nearly constant sound. The combined bols of the right *tabla* and the left *bayan* created a sweet, clear and powerful sound.

Ramsahay also introduced different *parans* with various names, e.g., *Siddha paran, Gaj paran, Chakradhar paran, Krishna paran, Raslila paran, Durga paran, Kali paran, Ganesh paran*, etc. At the beginning of an *uthan*, his style of playing was enriched with *lahara*, endless *chhanda* and *prakaran*, etc. He also founded a society of Tabla players in Varanasi for training artistes in this new style of playing. Not only in Varanasi, but in an area far afield, he left an unmistakable influence on other Tabla players and became a legendary figure in the world of Indian music.

Ramsahay's younger brother, Janakisahay, was at first a dance artiste, but Ramsahay made him give up dancing to train him in Tabla. Janakisahay thus became one of his earliest disciples. For six years, he also properly taught Bhairavsahay, the son of his other brother Gaurisahay.

At Nichibag Mahalla, every day after worshipping the deity, Bhairavsahay sat before it and practised his Tabla. He became famous even at the tender age of eighteen. At the age of twenty, he emerged as an all-India figure in the field of music. Upon being invited, he then joined the Darbar of the Rana of Nepal. In that highly esteemed Darbar, Bhairavsahay was the first representative of Banaras-baaj.

Another distinguished disciple of Ramsahay was Pratapji, a very powerful drum player. After Ramsahay's death, Pratapji, a worshipper of the goddess Kali, also received training from Janakisahay. Bhagatsaran, Raghunandan, Jadunandan and Baiju were also the well-trained students of Ramsahay. Ramsahay had many other disciples too, but the above mentioned seven disciples ranked highest and became renowned. It was through this group of disciples that Banaras-baaj was popularized.

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Finally, although Ramsahay took leave of performing, his method of playing spread far and near. The family[48] and disciple tree[49] of this school may be studied for further information regarding this Gharana.

Bundi Mishra Gharana of Tabla :

The founder of this school of Tabla was Bundi Mishra, whose preceptors were Ramsevak Mishra, Lachhmiprasad Mishra, and Shyamaprasad Mishra. The family[50] and disciple[51] tree of Bundi Mishra gives further information of this Gharana.

Sarangi

Badal Mishra Gharana :

Badal Mishra was the founder of the Gharana of this music. Among other distinguished Sarangi players, there were Kaliprasad and Gaurishankar Mishra. Gaurishankar had a number of disciples. The family[52] and disciple[53] tree of this school may be consulted for further information of this Gharana.

Pakhawaj

Bholanath Pathak Gharana :

Bholanath Pathak was the founder of a Pakhawaji Gharana. Mannuji was one of the illustrious students of Bholanath. The disciple[54] tree of Bholanath, as well as Mannuji, may be consulted for further information.

Shehnai

There were two celebrated Shehnai Gharanas founded by Mian Vilatu and Nandalal. The family and disciple trees of these schools give further information of these Gharanas.[55]

Dance

The Katthak form of dancing, we have already noted, flourished in Varanasi and spread to other places. There were quite a few Katthak dancers of the City, who were celebrated not only here, but also elsewhere. Most of the Katthak dancers were descendants of either Dulharam or Ganeshilal. The family trees of these dancers furnish ample information of this Gharana.[56]

COMPOSERS OF SONGS

Besides regular song composers, there were also composers among the musicians. For example, Kalidas Chattopadhyay, a vocalist, famous as

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Kali Mirza, also composed songs.[57] Poets like Babu Harishchandra, who composed *Kajri*, also did not lag behind in this respect. Among Kajri composers were also Premdhan and Shridhar Pathak.[58]

SCHOLARS OF MUSIC

We have come across some of the names of those who lived in Varanasi and were scholars of music. For example, Jafar Khan's son, Sadiq Ali, was not only proficient in music, but also a great scholar having knowledge of both Sanskrit and Persian, as well as music theory.[59] Again, Ramsevak, son of the famous musician Hariprasad, was also a good musician and a scholar of music. He received an F. A. degree from Queen's College of Varanasi and knew Sanskrit, Persian and Bengali. He was also the author of a book entitled, *Tal Prakash aur Tabla Vijnana*.[60]

VARANASI, THE CITY OF SHEHNAI

One can form an idea of the widespread culture of Shehnai in Varanasi from the regular programmes of Shehnai playing in temples and palaces. Shehnai was played in temples and palaces not only in the nineteenth century, but also much earlier.[61] The strains of the Shehnai could be heard reverberating in the Vishwanatha Temple during and after *arati*, and especially on the day of *Govinda Dwadashi*; at Indore Palace above Ahalyabai Ghat in each *prahar*; in Coochbihar *Satra* and the Kali Temple of Coochbihar State; at Vijayanagar Palace in each *prahar*; and in the Balaji Temple near Ram Ghat.

Moreover, on the day of *Holi*, when Holi singers of different quarters formed groups and went round the City, they were accompanied by Shehnai players.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCES OF MUSIC

Public music programmes were held at various locations around Varanasi.[62] At Kinaram's Ashrama on the way to Durgabadi, famous *baijees* of the City used to sing free of charge in an annual function held in memory of Sahdu Kinaram. This festival has a touching history. Once a baijee, possibly suffering from frustration, felt a spiritual yearning and went to various holy persons in a quest for peace only to be turned away. Finally, she approached Sadhu Kinaram, who felt compassion for her and initiated her into spiritual life. Remembering Kinaram's compassion

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towards a fallen woman, baijees would visit his Ashrama and sing every year on the occasion of his death-anniversary.

Other venues of such programme included the following : Vagishwari Temple where many proficient musicians used to play and sing for the public on Saraswati Puja; Dashashwamedh Ghat, in front of the Shitala Mandir, where baijees would sing in honour of God on a day of *Chaitra* without accepting fees; Durga Temple at Durga Kund and Jaran (Jatar) Temple near Ram Ghat.

On the seventh day of the bright fortnight of *Vaishakh*, the deity of Ganga used to be decorated on every ghat along the Ganga and music festivals were also arranged.

Among all such music festivals, the Budhwamangal festival became the most famous for its magnitude, pomp and grandeur.*

PRIVATE PERFORMANCES OF MUSIC AND MEHFILS

Musical *soirees*, or *mehfils*, were regularly performed in the houses or garden-houses of the *rais*. These mehfils were, to an extent, a training ground for high sophistication and a refined life-style that would also include music. There were two types of such performances.[63]

First, the audience of this type of musical soiree comprised regular musicians and persons who could appreciate music. In the presence of such an audience, competitions were held between the singers and the Sarangi and Harmonium players. At the end of his song, each singer would render an intricate *tana* and the Sarangi or Harmonium player had to reproduce the same on his instrument. Then the player in his turn would play a *tana* on his instrument and the vocalist had to sing the same. This competition between the singer and the player would continue for some time and finally the winner would be determined, taking into consideration the opinion of the audience. Sometimes there would even be such a competition between a singer and a Tabla player.

Secondly, a long programme of music, sometimes of twenty-four hours duration, would be held at private houses during *karnabhedha*, *upanayana*, marriages, births and like ceremonies. The soiree would start in the evening and each singer, usually a baijee, would sing according to a time-table synchronized with the particular timings of various *ragas*, for example, *Puravi, Iman, Puria, Darbari, Kanada, Kedar, Malkosh* and *Behag* for the night session; *Lalit, Ramkeli, Bhairav, Bhairavi, Vibhash,*

* For details, see Chapter VII.

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Jaunpuri and *Toḍi* for the morning session; and for late afternoons, *Bhimpalashree*.

Each singer would sing two different ragas at two different times during the twenty-four hour programme; thus, one who sang in the evening would sing the next morning, and one who sang at midnight would have his or her turn again the next afternoon or evening. This was arranged to ensure that each performer would get sufficient rest in between his or her programmes, as well as to get a chance to render two different kinds of ragas. The audience would also attend the programme in accordance with one's preference for ragas and artist. At the outset of performances, the twelve to fourteen baijees would express *bhao* and reveal the sense of the raga in freestyle, improvised dance postures, not set in *tala*. This added a new dimension to the musical content.

LIFE STYLES OF MUSICIANS

The Kathaks had their own society and their own social customs. Their family children were brought up and trained in such a way that they could become professional musicians in future. They lived a close family life and had social ties between themselves. Again, there were certain families, among both Hindus and Muslims, that were solely devoted to music. Among female musicians, there were those who were both musicians and mistresses. The musicians in general commanded respect, love, and appreciation from society, but if a musician should become a mistress, she would be looked down upon, even though her talent may be recognized and appreciated.

Proficiency in music obviously required hard labour and single-pointed devotion as well as a special aptitude of the learner.[64] Preceptors did not take any fees from students, but demanded total devotion. We may recall here that whenever Ramsahay, the reputed Tabla maestro, accepted a disciple, he did it in the robe of a monk.[65] This reveals the reverential attitude with which music was looked upon.

We may form a rough idea about the charges or fees demanded by these professionals from records showing that fees for a single dance performance were Rs. 32, while for songs the fees were Rs. 16.[66]

It is a pity that though musicians gave joy to others through their art, more often than not they suffered agonies and frustrations in their personal lives, especially in old age when they had to yield to and to make room for new talents.[67] Moreover, they were sometimes cheated of their lifelong

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earnings, which caused great hardship to them. There are also those examples of professional musicians who earned great fortunes through their work and also spent huge sums for benevolent purposes.[68]

THE PERSONALITY OF BANARASI MUSIC

What distinguished Banaras Gharanas from others and what was the personality of this music ? Like any other regional style, Banaras Gharanas featured folk-oriented music like *Chaiti*, *Holi* or *Kajali*, which was more simple in structure. This music was given elements of classical form resulting in a unique and aesthetical expression, but the tight rope between folk and classical music elements was never lost sight of.

The *lagav* (application) of the *swaras* (notes), the musical phrases alternating with poetic phrases, were blended together in the Banarasi music. This interplay offered immense scope to the singer and that spirit is present in Thumri and Dadra or the like, in their renderings. Thus, the musician freshly roamed the world of notes with proper pauses and stresses. Music here was more oriented to the artistic and poetic moods of the musician in a performance before a highly *rasika* and discerning audience.

There is a special term, *masti*, featuring the life-style of the City which means an approximation to moments full of satiety and pleasure, away from the world and verging on romantic pleasure. This masti, present in the psyche of both singer and audience, was always heightened by an artiste's performance. Masti was most sought after during such performances and accompanists like the Sarangi and Tabla maestros would offer gentle 'pushes' encouraging the artiste's masti to soar. The same features of this concept are reflected even in the higher or more indepth styles of Khayal, Tappa, etc.

Another distinguishing feature of the local music was the mehfil tradition, which has aready been noted.

From the above survey it is evident how greatly local musicians contributed to the enrichment of the musical world, and thereby, the cultural milieu of Varanasi by bestowing honour and glory upon their beloved City.

THE COURTESANS

The profession of courtesan, which developed as a special art in India, formed the theme of some Sanskrit works. This art, like that of the geisha

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in Japan, demanded from serious and ambitious novices arduous training in various branches of the performing arts including music and dance. Thus, there were courtesans who were highly proficient in different branches of the arts and their talents and skills gave them a dignity and repute that could hardly be maligned by low birth or an ignoble profession. Another trait of Indian courtesans was that most of them, by virtue of their being daughters of this land of spirituality, were religious-minded.

These courtesans usually flourished in the political and commercial centres of India. Varanasi, being the capital of many kings and also a highly flourishing business centre, witnessed scores of courtesans in all periods of its history. The additional factor in Varanasi's case, in comparison with other places of India, was the extraordinary religious character of the City as the giver of liberation to all people, whether saints or sinners. A deep conviction of this special attribute of the City further prompted courteseans to settle here.

Some courtesans were well known because of their musical talent and close connections with men of power, position and wealth. Consequently, *Banarasi* courtesans were given a prominent place in various literary works, for example, the *Kuttanimatam* in Sanskrit.

It is evident from the descriptions of the musical world of Varanasi and also of the fairs and festivals of the City during this period, that the courtesans of the City played an important part in the cultural history of Varanasi. Because there is little firsthand information available, it is difficult to make detailed observations about them during this period. Given the political and economic status of the City, it is however evident that there were a large number of courtesans in Varanasi at the time and it can be assumed that their ranks included both Hindus and Muslims. According to Prinsep's census of 1829 the number of Hindu and Muslim courtesans (*Kasbi Khangi* or *Ramjani*) were 1,500 and 1,212 respectively, and the number of Hindu and Muslim *nach*-girls (*Kasbi Ghungruband*) were 269 and 500 respectively, which was evidently a big number.

Prinsep again records the following with regard to these women :

> '...the bewitching influence of the arts and graces of these women is as much acknowledged and as powerful as ever. Examples are not wanting of large accumulations of wealth from the successful exercise of the skill and accomplishments of the profession: some of the best houses, and the handsomest temples of the city, have been erected by ladies of dancing notoriety. Their training commences in infancy : the girls being bought as children, are adopted into a

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partnership or *taefa*, to which their profits belong as a common stock: each rising in turn to the management of the general fund, as she acquires the right seniority. In order to be freed from the shackles of this partnership, a sum of money to cover the expenses of board and education, and to compensate the loss of advantage from the acquired talent, must be made good to the association. They are parted with most unwillingly, and there is a reciprocity of affection between the members of each set, which makes them seldom wish to dissolve the tie forever.'[69]

Mirza Ghalib, the celebrated poet of Delhi, being in a perfect position to appreciate aesthetics, observed Varanasi courtesans closely during his visit here in 1827.[70] He left an account of his personal impressions of them in a beautiful poem on Varanasi in Persian. This account was, however, presented in the usual flowery and imaginative style of a poet, and though subjective and impressionistic, it still furnished some rare pieces of information regarding the beauty, use of cosmetics, professional skills, and above all, the deep religious faith of the courtesans of the City.[71]

The houses of courtesans may have been one of the breeding grounds of crime; also they were partially responsible for the squandering of riches and the loosening of clients' family ties. Nevertheless, these courtesans, in spite of the anguish and suffering of a weary and empty life, and in certain cases the great economic distress and physical ailments of later life, made a significant contribution to the enrichment of the culture of Varanasi through their artistic talents.

The devout among local courtesans must have held it a special privilege to live in Varanasi, where they could get some peace and solace in their otherwise ignominious and wearisome life by ablution in the holy water of the Ganga, and taking refuge in the all-merciful Lord Shiva. Presumably, an inmost faith may have transformed some of them in this very life, while others would intently look forward to liberation after death.[72]

THE BHAṆḌS[73]

In Varanasi there was a class of comedians (or jesters) called *Bhaṇḍs*[74], who, by their amusing gestures, postures, songs, stories and clowning, would provoke roars of laughter from spectators. They were very popular and used to give their performances during festivals like Holi, and also at social functions like weddings.[75]

The Bhaṇḍs of Lucknow mostly performed by doing impersonations. The same form of jesting was also in vogue at Varanasi in the nineteenth

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century. At Lucknow in the *majlis* (assembly) of women, *domnia* (the women of the *dom* community) played the buffoon. The jesters of Varanasi had adopted the art of *nautanki*, rural drama, dancing, and singing. Bhanḍs formed a separate class and their customs and rituals were mostly like those of the Muslims. The Bhanḍs of Lucknow belonged to the Shia community, while Bhanḍs of other places, including Varanasi, were Sunnies and some were also Hindus. Bhanḍs were divided into two branches, *Chera* and *Kashmiri*. Cheras played on *Dholak* while Kashmiris played Tabla and Sarangi.

In Varanasi, the performance of jesting was generally held at one of the Agarwal's houses. People of different classes, such as Kolri, Kurmi, Kalwar, Barai, etc., also arranged such shows. Initially, Bhanḍs only used the Dholak in their programmes, and later added the *Nakaḍa*, but when they performed *nautanki*, they also used the Dholak, Harmonium and *Jhal*.

AJUBA AND THE BHANḌ MANDALI

The credit for establishing the first *Bhanḍ Mandali* or Jester Society in Varanasi went to Ajuba, before which there were surely Bhanḍs, but no formal society. Ajuba's real name was Maulabaksh and his forefathers had lived in the village of Kalikabara in the Varanasi district. Maulabaksh was born in 1822 and acquired great name and fame by dint of his unique showmanship. In Bihar, Uttarpradesh and Rajasthan, he was very popular and was aptly rewarded by many kings and chiefs, including Nawab Wazid Ali Shah. Maulabaksh passed away in 1901.

One anecdote regarding Maulabaksh goes like this : Once Maharaja Ishwarinarain asked Maulabaksh to show him his skills. While he was imitating a washerman, the Maharaj asked, 'What ? Where is your donkey ? A washerman can't do without a donkey.' Maulabaksh promptly pointed toward the audience. 'Maharaj !' he said, 'All are tied up'. The first implication of this was that all the audience were like donkeys and the second meaning was that the donkeys of the washermen were all tied up at their houses. At this the Maharaj could not help but utter, 'What a strange man (*ajab*) he is.' It is said that after this incident Maulabaksh changed his name to Ajuba and became known by that name.

Ajuba did not get any formal training in jesting. The source of his art and inspiration was the Budhwamangal, the famous boat festival of Varanasi. A regular visitor to this festival, he would try to imitate all he

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had seen there before his friends. At Budhwamangal, there were programmes of song, which inspired him also to compose lyrics. By this constant practice of mimicry before his friends, he became a master of this art and a famous jester. One characteristic of Ajuba's skill was his ability to imitate the cries of different animals. Later, after forming a society, he took up this profession and performed at various places. *Bhanḍ* programmes were staged in a manner similar to that of the *yatra* performances of Bengal. People sat surrounding three sides of the stage, while two men stood holding the two ends of a bed sheet, which served as a screen, on the fourth. Actors would sit behind the screen, while some of them were performing. Two other men stood on both sides of the screen with lamps.

In no time Ajuba became familiar as a popular and busy artist throughout Varanasi, having also received regular invitations from the neighbouring states. As, at that time, there were few other sources of entertainment, Ajuba's performances filled the void and he was in great demand. The people of Varanasi were Ajuba's main patrons for more than half a century. On occasions like weddings, Ajuba and his party's presence was a source of pride. On the second day of the marriage ceremony, a party would be given at which he would perform from two to eight hours at a stretch.

When Ajuba appeared before the audience, he would first imitate the cry of the horse and sing :

घोड़े बछेड़े दिनोंमें चार साल
न पूछिए हमारे घोड़े का हाल
घोड़ा मेरा रफ्तार में है
दिल में भरा गुब्बार है ...।[76]

The free translation of this song is as follows :

Please do not ask (me) about the condition of my horse.
(since) The colt (becomes a) horse in four years.
My horse is speedy, (since) its heart is filled with (the flying) clouds.

Finally, praising his own group he would sing the following and start the main programme :

छोटी-मोटी ढोलकी
ओर छोटे-मोटे भांड़।
जब बाजन लागी ढोलकी
तो नाचन लागे भांड़॥

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The meaning here is :

Our *dholki* (percussion instrument) is small.
And (similarly) we bhaṇds are little ones and humble.
As the dholki is played
The bhaṇds start their performance.

A special feature of the performance was that wherever the Bhaṇds went they would mimic any faults found with anyone present without even sparing the distinguished.

Ajuba gave the name Ajuba Bhaṇd Mandali to his own group of jesters. Many Hindus and Muslims who worked in his group, left him afterwards and formed their own *mandalis* or groups. Among Ajuba's disciples, Muhammad Husain, Turab Husain, Mukundilal, Chand Khan, Nate, Markandeya and Jumman became famous, the latter two being especially popular in Varanasi.

DRAMA

Enactments of the Ramlila (the divine play of Rama) and Krishnalila (the divine play of Krishna) were popular in Varanasi during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and different episodes in the lives of Rama and Krishna were staged on these occasions. Songs, recitations, and dialogues usually formed part of such performances. The actors, generally males, wore costly and dazzling costumes. The religious themes of these plays as well as their colourful presentation attracted great crowds who followed the performance for hours in rapt devotion.*

Dramas with secular or social themes were not generally staged during this period, though there were a few exceptions. *Mrigankalekha*, a short drama, which was composed in Sanskrit by Vishwanatha, son of Trimaladeva, who originally lived on the bank of the Godavari and subsequently migrated to Varanasi, was staged at the 'Festival of Vishweshwara' about the end of the eighteenth century. The theme of the drama, in four acts, describes the marriage of Mrigankalekha and Karpuratilaka as follows :

Mrigankalekha is the daughter of the King of Kamarupa in Assam. She has been spotted by Karpuratilaka, the King of Kalinga, while hunting, and the two have become mutually enamoured. The obstacle to their union is Shankhapala, a demon with supernatural power. To counteract the demon's

* For details of the Ramlila and Krishnalila, see Chapter VII.

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power, the king's minister, who alone is aware of the situation, invites a benevolent magician, Siddhayogini, to the palace. Mrigankalekha is also staying in the palace as a friend of Queen Vilasavati. Notwithstanding these precautions, Mrigankalekha is abducted by Shankhapala and carried off to the temple of Kali. Hounds come to the temple, rescue Mrigankalekha and kill Shankhapala. The king is then united with the princess in the presence of her father and brother, with the consent of his queen. Before the marriage can be concluded, the king kills Shankhapala's brother who comes to take revenge on him in the form of a wild elephant.[77]

Though the drama is an imitation of the *Ratnavali*, another famous Sanskrit drama, the poet has his own enchanting and imaginative style.[78]

Modern theatre, which was introduced to India by the British, made a rather late start in Varanasi. The first performance of a drama on the Western model was held in the City on April 3, 1868.[79] This drama, based on the *Ramayana* and entitled *Janakimangal*, was authored by Pandit Shitalprasad Tripathi, the court pandit of the Kashi Naresh and a Professor at Benares Sanskrit College.[80] One of the actors was no less than the celebrated writer of Hindi, Bharatendu Harishchandra, who played the role of Lakshmana. The drama, staged at the Assembly Hall, later known as 'Nachghar', in the Cantonment area, attracted a good number of spectators, including the local elite and their ladies, high ranking Government and military officers, and even local pandits. The programme was made possible by the special interest and initiative taken by Maharaja Ishwarinarain.[81] The successful performance of this Hindi drama inspired a series of experiments in the field of drama on modern lines in the City.[82]

WESTERN MUSIC, DANCE AND DRAMA

Local Europeans had established a club, a theatre hall, and a ballroom in Secrole, the British colony of Varanasi. It may be reasonably presumed that foreign community was engaged in ballroom dancing and enjoyed performances of Western music and dramas, etc., at these venues.

INTERACTION BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN MUSIC

At the very outset, when the Britishers were too few in the City to set up any club, they mixed rather freely with the local nobility. This continued more or less even after the establishment of the European clubs in Varanasi till almost the end of the period of our review. During this time

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it was customary on the part of some local nobility to invite the English officials to some important social or cultural functions, and English officials would also invite local nobles in turn. This exchange of invitations made possible the appreciation of each other's cultures. Western music and dance were taught to some of the professional dancing girls of the court of Varanasi kings, who, in turn, would perform before Western visitors on suitable occasions.*

At the very real risk of over-simplification, let us say that in general, while Indian music stresses the importance of embellished melodies, cadence and minimal accompaniment of solo renditions, Western music stresses harmony in melodies for diverse orchestral elements and shared solos, and any appreciation of these two great musical traditions at such functions without sufficient orientation must have been more superficial than genuine. Rather, the rendering of Western music by local artists was motivated more by the desire to put on a show for the European guests. But unlike in the field of painting, no serious attempt at mutual appreciation of Indian and Western music was made in the City during this period.**

PAINTING

In the history of painting in modern India, Varanasi has certainly occupied a distinct place for some extraordinary local features and characteristics. First and foremost is that the City itself became the subject for innumerable paintings, some being masterpieces; secondly, the Company School of Painting emerged here and finally, the City maintained the wall-paintings it had inherited from the past.

One painting, showing Mir Rustam Ali celebrating the Holi Festival, suggests the existence of a Provincial Mughal style of painting in the second quarter of the eighteenth century in Varanasi. Subsequently, court painters, of the Mughal prince Jehander Shah II, headed by Lalji Mal

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* Instances of such performances have been furnished in Chapter XVII—The Europeans.

** Interesting commentaries on comparisons between Eastern and Western music and the possibility of a mutual impact upon the two have been made by such luminaries as Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Dilipkumar Ray and Romain Rolland, all of whom were also accomplished musicians and familiar with these two great traditions. For Vivekananda's views on music, see Priyanath Singha, 'Swamijir Smriti', *Udbodhan*, a Bengali monthly of the Ramakrishna Order, Vol. VII, pp. 259-60, 1311-12 B.S., Calcutta; for Rabindranath's and Rolland's views on music, see Dilip Kumar Roy, *Tirthankar*, pp. 19-23, 139-42, 1997 ed.

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Musavvar, immigrated to the City along with the Prince from Delhi in 1784. Lalji Mal, belonging to the famous family of Niddhamal, was a champion of the then existing Mughal School and laid the foundation for this school in Varanasi by initiating Sardar Sikkhi, a traditional painter in local style and Yadava by caste, into its tenets. Thus, the Varanasi sub-school of later Mughal painting was founded.

Later in this line, Ustad Mulchand, the son of Sardar Sikkhi, was the key figure. Ram Prasad, the son of Mulchand, was a talented artist of high order and a great master not only of the Mughal School but also of the Company School.[83] During the eighteenth century, this Gharana of painters worked in three media which were not strictly in the later Mughal Painting tradition. These included water colour or oil portraits from life (later, also based on photographs); ivory painting (compositions, especially in poetic situations or portraits) and traditional representations of *dhyanas* or iconographic forms of Hindu deities, especially as cult objects. The first two were greatly influenced by European painting, but the great tradition of the *dhyana* paintings, which had maintained its purity, was lost with the decline of this Gharana.

The local Varanasi style of painting is known to us from random examples. The portrait of Gwal Das Sahu is one such example that shows some distant relationship with Rajasthani painting, yet one cannot miss the local character, the rough texture, bold treatment, broad brushwork, and a particular orange tone. This style is totally distinct from the sugary style present in the tinted sketch, *Rustam Ali celebrating Holi Festival.** An illustrated manuscript of the *Ramacharitmanas*, which dates in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century and is now scattered amongst various collections, shows another style, more linear, but vibrant with crowded scenes and fast-moving figures.

It was during the reign of Rustam Ali that an ambitious project was commissioned by a local businessman to produce a text of the *Bhagavata* translated into *Vrajabhasha*, with hundreds of illustrated panels of varying sizes. These illustrations, at least full page compositions, are representative of the true Varanasi style of painting. Unfortunately, examples of this eighteenth century style that can be authenticated by date are restricted to these illustrations.

An illustrated copy of *Ramacharitmanas*** was limited to almost the

* The painting has been preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan collection.

** The copy has also been preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan.

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end of the *Bala Kanda* and comprising over one hundred and fifty illustrations. Three or four styles were at work in this manuscript. Whether these were local trends, or from artists from centres like Datia or Jaipur, to which they sometimes show a relationship, cannot be determined. These artists must have left an impact on the local style and are definitely the best of the group, and some of these compositions are breathtaking. As already observed, some other groups of the local tradition, but of lesser calibre, also joined hands.

Two Budhwamangal oil paintings, one preserved by the Maharaja of Banaras and the other by the Bharatendu Harishchandra family, can be ascribed to the second half of the nineteenth century. These have a crude, hybrid style, and are not representative of the high Varanasi style. To this class can be attributed the story of Shakuntala painted on the walls of a chamber in the Ramnagar Fort Palace. There is also an illustrated manuscript of *Ramacharitmanas* in the Maharaja of Banaras collection, which deserves special mention.

VARANASI WITNESSES BOTH INDIAN AND WESTERN SCHOOLS

The Indian school of painting emphasizes more ideas and idealizing of objects than the objects themselves. Thus, while the idea constitutes the central theme of the Indian painting, form, style and object constitute the soul of Western painting. Varanasi witnessed both Indian and Western schools of painting from the time of the occupation of the City by the British, when European artists, chiefly British, flocked here in large numbers.[84] Among them, both amateurs and professionals drew inspiration from the panoramic views of Varanasi, which formed the theme of many of their paintings.

Artists who painted both miniature and full-size pictures used paper, canvas, leather, walls and the like. The media also varied, including oil, water-colour, coal, pencil, etc. Subject matter also included a wide variety—people, nature, buildings, temples and ghats. Oil portraits, examples of which are still found in the Ramnagar Fort Collections, were popular among the local aristocrats and gentry.

Despite the two distinct schools of Western and Indian painting, when local artists had occasion to observe the work of Western artists closely and showed an active interest in it, it left an impact upon them which resulted in the emergence of the Company School of Painting. The medium of this school of painting was water colour and the socio-cultural

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aspects of Indian life were taken up as themes. This school became very popular, especially among the local gentry, under whose patronage it flourished remarkably. The Company School was, however, more Western than Indian in form and idea. But a school of painting which had more Indian characteristics than Western emerged, not in Varanasi, but in Bengal.

KASHI KINGS—THE CHIEF PATRONS OF PAINTING

The local kings made substantial contributions to the field of painting during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Maharaja Uditnarain commissioned a wall-painting in the Kali Temple at Ramnagar Fort. *Chet Singh ki Saviha* dated 1809 and the illustrated manuscript of *Ramacharitmanas* were also produced during his time.[85]

Maharaja Ishwarinarain was a connoisseur and patron of various branches of fine arts, as well as the performing arts. It was during his time that some painters of the traditional line studied European painting and were influenced by it. Among the artists who flourished during this time were Hatkerlal, Gopal Chand, Balai Chand, Shivaram and Suraj. The artists proficient in wall-painting at this time included Kamalapati, Chunnilal, Munnilal, Biharilal, Ganesh Prasad, Mahesh Prasad and Misrilal. It deserves special mention that Misrilal went to Paris to take part in an Exhibition held there in 1855.[86] Moreover, one of the best examples of art patronized by the line of the Kashi Naresh right from 1781 was the illustrated manuscript of the *Mahabharata*.

WESTERN ARTISTS

Nearly all European visitors during this period would come either via the river or the land-route from Calcutta and approach the City from the east. In either case, visitors coming to the City from the east had to cross the Ganga. While crossing the river they got a panoramic view of the City with its vast kaleidoscopic landscape.[87] The first sight of the City was so captivating that artistic minds would naturally be lost in its beauty and charm and would be eager to capture this enchanting experience in the form of paintings.*

Malachowski, a Polish traveller, commented that only a painter's brush would be able to present in totality the originality of the objects presented by Varanasi[88] Even the inadequacies of the painter's brush in attempting to

* For comparison, see quotations on the first sight of the City in Chapter I.

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represent the beauty of Varanasi becomes evident when Fanny Parks comments :

> 'In the midst of hundreds and hundreds of temples and ghats, piled one above another on the high cliff or rising out of the Ganges, the mind is perfectly bewildered; it turns from beauty to beauty, anxious to preserve the memory of such, and the amateur throws down the pencil in despair.'[89]

Among the European visitors to the City there were many British, both male and female, who were enthusiastic amateur artists. Instruction in drawing was a normal part of upper- and middle-class education in Britain, and before coming to India most of the British East India Company employees and their wives had taken lessons in watercolour painting.[90] They were taught to judge landscapes in terms of compositional beauty, and from this aesthetic, the banks of Ganga, especially at Varanasi, were indeed picturesque.[91] Now the Western artists are briefly presented :

William Hodges R. A. : Hodges, the professional landscape painter and the first of his contemporary European artists to arrive, reached the City along with Warren Hastings on August 15, 1781.[92] During his stay here, he completed a number of drawings and oil paintings including some of the forts of Chet Singh, others the ghats, palaces, temples, and mosques of the City. On his return to England, two views of Varanasi painted by him were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1787 and 1788, and two drawings were published as aquatints in his *Select Views* in 1786. Warren Hastings considered Hodges' paintings to be most valuable and endearing. A number of his oil-paintings were purchased by Hastings and also officers who were involved in the sieges of Chet Singh's fort.[93] Some of these pieces of art still hang at the Daylesford House of Hastings.[94] The Hindu architecture of Varanasi, especially the temple of Vishweshwara, impressed Hodges very much. During his stay, he began to write a 'treatise on architecture' in which he attacked the 'European obsession with classical models' and insisted on 'the beauty of Eastern architectural forms'. He illustrated his text with a drawing of a column from the temple of Vishweshwara.[95]

James Forbes : Forbes was an amateur painter who lived in India for several years and visited Varanasi from the 26th to the 31st of August, 1785. His drawings of the City were published in his account entitled, *Oriental Memoirs*.[96]

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L. Contestabili : Contestabili was a French miniature painter who came to Varanasi in 1798.[97] Further details on him or his work are unknown.

Thomas Daniell (1749-1840) and **William Daniell** (1769-1837) : Thomas Daniell and his nephew, William, were professional landscape painters who visited the City in 1788 for only two days, but on their next visit in 1789 they stayed longer.[98] This time they went round the City extensively and made numerous sketches in pencil, wash or watercolour of buildings, ghats, etc. Some of these formed the basis for three aquatints of Varanasi, depicting Ramnagar, opposite Varanasi, Dashashwamedh Ghat, and the Baolee at Ramnagar.[99] They produced a number of watercolour paintings on themes related to the City. At the Royal Academy, Thomas exhibited *A view of Benares, East Indies*, in 1797; *The Gate of the Old Fort at Benares, East Indies*, in 1799; *Gauts on Benares on the River Ganges, East Indies*, in 1802, and *Part of Benares on the River Ganges* in 1806.[100] *The Bernar Pagoda, a little below Benares, on the River Ganges, East Indies* and *Sheewollah Ghaut* (Shivala Ghat), *Benares, on the River Ganges*, were exhibited in 1798 and 1802 respectively.[101] Among his studies later on were *Lalita Ghat* and *Mir Ghat* of Varanasi, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum of Britain.[102]

It has been observed that 'the Daniells were clearly fascinated by the warm-coloured sandstone architecture (of Varanasi) intermixed with clumps of dark foliage, and by the spires and towers of temples and palace-pavilions silhouetted against the sky.'[103] Sound topographical draughtsmanship was identified as another quality of the Daniells' paintings that were based on careful architectural notes and sketches.[104] According to W. G. Archer, a renowned art critic of today, 'It was chiefly through the work of the Daniells, especially their aquatints, which had a wide circulation, that the architecture of India became absorbed into the British romantic tradition. Their paintings gave cities such as Benares the same stature and grandeur as that of Rome and Athens.'[105]

The Daniells were, however, criticized by some quarters for their sober visions. Edward Lear, a professional artist of England, who had visited Varanasi from the 12th to 15th December 1873 and had painted scenes of the City, remarks in his diary :

> 'How well I remember the views of Benares by Daniell R. A.: pallid, grey, sad, solemn. I had always supposed this place a melancholy, or at least a staid and soberly-coloured spot, a grey record of bygone days. Instead I find it one of the

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most abundantly buoyant, and startlingly radiant of places, full of bustle and movement. Constantinople or Naples are simply dull and quiet by comparison'.[106]

George Cherry[107] : Cherry had been appointed the British Resident in Varanasi in 1793 but was killed during the Wazir Ali's insurrection in 1799. He was a competent amateur artist.

Samuel Davis[108] : Davis was posted in the City as Judge and Magistrate in 1795. In addition to being a mathematician and astronomer, and possessing a keen interest in antiquities, Davis was also an enthusiastic sketcher of landscapes.

James Prinsep[109] : Prinsep, who belonged to the Bengal Civil Service, was Assay Master at the Benares Mint from 1820 to 1830. He identified himself with the City in various ways and thus acquired an intimate knowledge of Varanasi that helped him as an amateur painter as well. *Benares Illustrated*, published by him, contained a series of drawings in three parts between 1831 and 1834. His work depicted various scenes of the City, for example, the ghats, tortuous alley-ways, the insides of residential houses, and the architecture of temples and palaces. Various facets of the religious life of the people, for example, a priest reading the Puranas, crowds awaiting an eclipse of the moon, and the great Ramlila festival, were ably depicted in Prinsep's renderings.

Thomas Bacon : Bacon was an amateur British painter who visited the City around 1830 and left an account of it.[110]

Fanny Parks : Parks (as mentioned earlier) was also an amateur British painter who visited the City around 1830 and left an account of this visit.[111]

Captain Robert Smith : Smith was a Bengal Engineer and an amateur artist. He produced some paintings during the time of his journey in 1893 down the Ganga to Varanasi.[112]

Mrs Hariette Ashmore : Mrs Ashmore, the wife of a British military officer, also was an amateur painter. She came to Varanasi by road and lived in the City for a few days in 1834, when she made some drawings.[113]

Commander Robert Elliot and **Lt. Geo. Francis White** : Elliot and White were British military officers and amateur artists who visited Varanasi in the 1850s and made some sketches. Their drawings of different sites of Hindusthan formed the basis of paintings by Turner, Stanfield, Prout, Cattermole, Roberts, Allom and others.[114]

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Edward Lear : Lear was a professional artist and on the invitation of Viceroy Lord Northbrook, he visited India and Ceylon and stayed in Varanasi from the 12th to 15th December of 1873. He viewed the City from a boat and produced sketches of the City. It was said of his style :

> 'The conception of the "picturesque" had now changed and the city he depicted is at first sight very different from that of Hodges and the Daniells.... Although Lear's own watercolour technique was rooted in the eighteenth century method of "watercolour drawing" with a firm outline and washes of colour, he nonetheless had an entirely different vision. In the Benares sketches the flecks and dales of colour—mauve, pink and yellow give a vivid impression of movement and sparkle, and catch the shifting kaleidoscope of light and people.'[115]

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE WESTERN ARTISTS

The following comments by W. G. Archer on the paintings of Varanasi by western artists during our period, both amateur and professional, are worth considering :

> 'It is, in fact, the changing vision of the century which is reflected in the paintings of Benares made by both amateurs and professionals such as Hodges, the Daniells and Lear. It swings from grandly picturesque views to impressionistic flashes. But the immensity of the subject makes its impact on all their work, that magical combination of a sweeping panorama, rich architecture, shimmering water and bustling life, which to many European and American visitors is still the poetic essence of this incomparable city.'[116]

THE COMPANY SCHOOL OF PAINTING

Painting in the European style was attempted by those Indian artists who had come in contact with European artists from the eighteenth century onwards and had studied the latter's style of painting, especially, watercolour. This led to the emergence of a typical school of painting called the 'Company School' in Varanasi and illustrates the Indo-British interaction in the field of Fine Arts.

Major Kittoe, who once conducted excavations in Sarnath and made careful drawings of the sculptures revealed by the digs, trained some local artists to assist him. *Kayasth* painters like Pyare Lal, Mahesh Lal, Ganesh Lal, Giridhari Lal, Ganesh Prasad, and Mahesh Prasad were among these artists.[117] Drawings by these artists, as well as by Major Kittoe, have been included in three large volumes in the India Office Library and their works can 'scarcely be distinguished from those made by Kittoe himself '.[118]

The Company School of painting, according to one oral tradition, emerged when one Dallulal (c.1790—c.1860) moved to Varanasi from

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Danapur, Patna in 1815 and began to work for the British. He actually came from the Patna painter community which was already making pictures of this type for the British. Next, he was joined by another Patna painter, Kamalapati (c.1760—c.1838), in 1818 who made sets of pictures on both paper and mica. When Fanny Parks visited Varanasi in 1831 she commented on the high quality of the mica paintings.[119] Kamalapati's brother Phulchand and a certain Shiva Ram also produced similar work. After Kamalapati's death, his sons, Chunni, Muni and Biharilal, carried on the family profession of painting which now flourished. They were joined in style by their cousins, Mishra and Munilal, and Ganesh and Mahesh Prasad. The latter artists were among those who assisted Kittoe in making European style drawings of the excavated sculpture. At the same time, another artist, Mulchand by name, was also working both in the bazaar and for Kittoe. During this period, that is, in the 1840s, numerous sets of pictures of the Company School were hawked around the Cantonments, and some of such works were sent to Calcutta and even as far as to England.[120]

It was mainly the Europeans who patronized the Company School of Painting, for they wanted to procure paintings of scenes of Indian life, but Banarasis also extended their patronization to the Company School.[121] Maharaja Uditnarain was one of such patrons. Again Maharaja Ishwarinarain had in his court, painters like Dallulal and his disciples Lal Chandra and Gopal Chandra,[122] who have left a large number of paintings showing scenes of court life of the Varanasi Darbar.[123] Shiva Ram and his son Surat were also patronized by the Maharaja.[124] All of these artists made flower studies for him and also portraits of the people around him.[125] There was actually a bazaar of such artists at Rewari Talao.

The Company School of painting, which once supplemented the local style and even the later Mughal style in these parts of the country,[126] continued in the City till the late nineteenth century. But with the growing popularity of photography, this school of painting gradually declined.[127]

WALL PAINTINGS[128]

Wall paintings, which were common in Varanasi, and as a matter of fact, in the whole of north India, had a long tradition in this City. Western travellers give testimony to the wall paintings as a very common scene in Varanasi, but they could hardly appreciate this form of painting. For

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example, George Valentia comments, 'They (the houses) are whimsically painted'.

Heber's description is a little more elaborate and interesting, stating :

> 'The material of the building is a very good stone from Chunar, but the Hindoos here seem fond of painting them a deep red colour, and indeed of covering the more conspicuous parts of their houses with paintings in gaudy colours of flower-pots, men, women, bulls, elephants, gods and goddesses in all their many forms, many headed, many handed and many weaponed varieties.'[129]

In addition to the painting of outer walls, it was also a popular fashion to decorate the inner walls of the rooms of houses and temples with wall paintings. The main purpose behind such decoration was to protect the houses from evil spirits and also to have a good effect upon the dwellers.[130]

The artists proficient in wall painting belonged to the oldest families of Varanasi and their ideas and skills were inspired by the religious traditions of the land. Walls were decorated by painting stories from the *Ramayana* in their own traditional styles. They showed their talents in depicting not only the Puranic stories of India, but also different scenes from daily life and also in painting charming pictures of animals like deer, horses, fish, etc. Their skill was also expressed in the field of the decorative arts and in making toys, masks, etc.

Those devoid of all imagination looked down upon this art form, free from all foreign influence, as archaic and of inferior quality. But if one went beyond the apparent, it might be found that in this simple technique there lay a deep religious feeling. From the use of the right perspective and consistency of the composition within the enclosure of a black line drawn with the powerful stroke of a brush, it seems that even if they were judged by the standards of modern art, the pictures would be regarded as artistically successful.

The locality of Varanasi where this *pata* art had gradually developed, and where objects of everyday use like wooden and clay toys, etc., were produced on a large scale, was known as Haḍha Mahalla. This art was a hereditary profession of some old families of Varanasi and every member of such families had to contribute his or her labour in less or more degree. If one would visit such a family, one could see that someone was extracting colour from plants and leaves; someone was making clay balls; or someone was making paper pulp. In this way family members minimized the labour of the *patua* or painter by doing the primary, but,

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essential jobs, so the painter could fully utilize his strength, skill and time in making colourful pictures.

Though these wall paintings gave the impression of a particular type of design, it was not difficult to understand that the *patuas* had fully realized the inherent characteristics of this art. These pictures, painted on walls, bear testimony to their sincere endeavour and artistic ability. Moreover, wall painting required a genuine indigenous technique, and, in spite of the fact that the method of colour selection was not established on a scientific basis, it was a fit instrument for expressing the emotions and ideas of the artists. The synthesis of a new freshness and life-force, compatible with the Hindu spiritual instinct and its fine tenderness, was an interesting characteristic of this folk art. This art helped to create a taste for spiritualizing the physical details in the field of decorative art.

In the selection of subject matter there was a similarity among the artists following different techniques. This form of painting was a figurative mode of expression which came out of the artist's individuality. The pictures were painted with a single colour yet an easy and successful expression of endless emotions and rich ideas was present there. But their ideas could be understood only after studying them with full concentration and with the background of a proper education in Indian art.

ARCHITECTURE

Hindu Temples

Study of the architecture of places of worship, private and public houses, and ghats is also important for the study of Banarasi culture. Though the City was once rich in temple architecture, successive attacks on Hindu temples by Muslim invaders or rulers devastated some of the finest specimens of temple architecture in Varanasi. The magnificent temples of Vishwanatha and Bindumadhava, for example, fell victim to such devastations. Thus, the temple architecture of Varanasi received such a set back during the Mediaeval period that it could never revive its glory in later years and consequently could not stand comparison with the rich architectural traditions of South Indian temples. Temples multiplied in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but they are neither very old nor so elegant.*

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* Structural and other details of the temples of this period have already been dealt with in Chapter VI—Religion.

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Here are furnished only a few general observations on the temple architecture of the City. Most of the famous and often-frequented temples like those of Vishwanatha, Annapurna, Bhaironath, Kedarnath, Vireshwara and Durga have very few special features from the standpoint of architecture. Thus, in spite of their *jagamohan*, *garbhagrihas*, etc., their walls and entrance-gates are quite plain.

Excepting the occasional case of the impact of Muslim architecture, as on the dome of the Vishwanatha Temple, the common style of architecture that was followed in the construction of the temples[131] was the *Nagara Shikhara Shaili*. Its spectacular specimens were found in the Sumeru and Durga Pancharatna Temples of Ramnagar, the construction of which was started by Raja Chet Singh and completed by his successors, and also in the Bhonsla Temple constructed by the Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur in 1866.[132]

The impact of the *Nagara* style of architecture was also clearly visible on many temples, the most spectacular being the oblique and half-drowned temple near Manikarnika, built by Ratna Bai in the eighteenth century.[133]

The Nepalese Temple, built after the sloping temple roof style of Nepal, though small in size, presented an exquisite and very special style of architecture that had no parallel in the City from the point of form, embellishment, and erotic theme.[134]

The large number of temples constructed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by chiefs and rich persons from different provinces were sometimes designed and built by architects of their own native areas. Obviously, such construction bore the clear mark of the schools of architecture to which these people belonged. Thus, the Nepalese Temple built by order of the King of Nepal in 1847 and the temples built by Rani Bhavani in Bengali Tola in the second half of the eighteenth century bore marks of those schools of architecture.

Like the Nepalese Temple, another temple having no parallel either in form or idea in the temple-city of Varanasi was the Gurudhama Temple. This temple, built in the early part of the nineteenth century, was in a class by itself, though the Bengal school had some impact on the architecture of this temple.*

Jaina and Buddhist Temples

In the Bhadaini and Bhelupura quarters of the City, the birth places of Suparshvanath and Parshvanath respectively, Jaina temples were

* This temple has been dealt with in length in Chapter VI.

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essential jobs, so the painter could fully utilize his strength, skill and time in making colourful pictures.

Though these wall paintings gave the impression of a particular type of design, it was not difficult to understand that the *patuas* had fully realized the inherent characteristics of this art. These pictures, painted on walls, bear testimony to their sincere endeavour and artistic ability. Moreover, wall painting required a genuine indigenous technique, and, in spite of the fact that the method of colour selection was not established on a scientific basis, it was a fit instrument for expressing the emotions and ideas of the artists. The synthesis of a new freshness and life-force, compatible with the Hindu spiritual instinct and its fine tenderness, was an interesting characteristic of this folk art. This art helped to create a taste for spiritualizing the physical details in the field of decorative art.

In the selection of subject matter there was a similarity among the artists following different techniques. This form of painting was a figurative mode of expression which came out of the artist's individuality. The pictures were painted with a single colour yet an easy and successful expression of endless emotions and rich ideas was present there. But their ideas could be understood only after studying them with full concentration and with the background of a proper education in Indian art.

ARCHITECTURE

Hindu Temples

Study of the architecture of places of worship, private and public houses, and ghats is also important for the study of Banarasi culture. Though the City was once rich in temple architecture, successive attacks on Hindu temples by Muslim invaders or rulers devastated some of the finest specimens of temple architecture in Varanasi. The magnificent temples of Vishwanatha and Bindumadhava, for example, fell victim to such devastations. Thus, the temple architecture of Varanasi received such a set back during the Mediaeval period that it could never revive its glory in later years and consequently could not stand comparison with the rich architectural traditions of South Indian temples. Temples multiplied in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but they are neither very old nor so elegant.*

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* Structural and other details of the temples of this period have already been dealt with in Chapter VI—Religion.

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Here are furnished only a few general observations on the temple architecture of the City. Most of the famous and often-frequented temples like those of Vishwanatha, Annapurna, Bhaironath, Kedarnath, Vireshwara and Durga have very few special features from the standpoint of architecture. Thus, in spite of their *jagamohan*, *garbhagrihas*, etc., their walls and entrance-gates are quite plain.

Excepting the occasional case of the impact of Muslim architecture, as on the dome of the Vishwanatha Temple, the common style of architecture that was followed in the construction of the temples[131] was the *Nagara Shikhara Shaili*. Its spectacular specimens were found in the Sumeru and Durga Pancharatna Temples of Ramnagar, the construction of which was started by Raja Chet Singh and completed by his successors, and also in the Bhonsla Temple constructed by the Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur in 1866.[132]

The impact of the *Nagara* style of architecture was also clearly visible on many temples, the most spectacular being the oblique and half-drowned temple near Manikarnika, built by Ratna Bai in the eighteenth century.[133]

The Nepalese Temple, built after the sloping temple roof style of Nepal, though small in size, presented an exquisite and very special style of architecture that had no parallel in the City from the point of form, embellishment, and erotic theme.[134]

The large number of temples constructed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by chiefs and rich persons from different provinces were sometimes designed and built by architects of their own native areas. Obviously, such construction bore the clear mark of the schools of architecture to which these people belonged. Thus, the Nepalese Temple built by order of the King of Nepal in 1847 and the temples built by Rani Bhavani in Bengali Tola in the second half of the eighteenth century bore marks of those schools of architecture.

Like the Nepalese Temple, another temple having no parallel either in form or idea in the temple-city of Varanasi was the Gurudhama Temple. This temple, built in the early part of the nineteenth century, was in a class by itself, though the Bengal school had some impact on the architecture of this temple.*

Jaina and Buddhist Temples

In the Bhadaini and Bhelupura quarters of the City, the birth places of Suparshvanath and Parshvanath respectively, Jaina temples were

* This temple has been dealt with in length in Chapter VI.

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constructed. From an architectural standpoint, there is nothing to distinguish these structures from the common style current in the City.

In the City proper, there was no Buddhist temple, but newer Buddhist temples and monasteries were constructed in Sarnath later than the period under review.

Mosques and Tombs

As mentioned earlier, some of the Hindu temples of the City were converted into mosques. Both Hindu and Saracenic features were clearly observed in the architecture of some of these mosques. There were also many mosques which were newly constructed before and during this period. These mosques were not rich in architectural traditions, but looked like ordinary places of Islamic worship. This was also true of tombs which were erected in memory of Muslim chiefs, nobility and holy persons.

Churches

When the Europeans settled in Varanasi, they erected a few churches here.* These churches demonstrated a new style of architecture, that is, British Gothic, a branch of the European school of architecture; but they were never looked upon as fine or magnificent specimens of European architecture. Architecturally these Christian places of worship had a novel appearance but aesthetically they were neither attractive nor graceful.

Indian Style Houses

Old temples were rarely to be seen in the City but there were many old edifices which were used for residential and other purposes. Most of these old edifices, though gigantic in size and constructed in mixed Rajput and Mughal styles, were mostly plain looking. Some of the mansions that were owned by the Kashi Naresh and other chiefs and nobles were, of course, architecturally beautiful. Below is one general description of the houses as viewed by a European traveller in 1803 :[135]

> 'The houses (in the City) are built of stone, some, six stories high, close to each other, with terraces on the summit. They are whimsically painted, and the architecture is extra-ordinary. Bands of carved work run in general round each storey by no means especially executed and the large masses of stone used in the walls, together with the neat manner in which they are joined, show that the masons are very tolerable workmen. The windows are extremely small, and probably they are formed in this manner to answer two purposes, first, to prevent the opposite

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* Details of these churches have been already furnished in Chapter VI.

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neighbours from overlooking the apartments: and, secondly, to keep the houses more cool during the hot wind.

Our style of architecture is by no means adapted to the climate, and the large windows would be insufferable, were it not for the tallys (screens on the outside of a window, composed of the roots of sweet scented grass, on which water is constantly thrown by the servants, which perfectly cools the air) which are easily applied to a house one storey high, but would be impracticable in a house of six storeys, and situated in a town.... The opposite sides of the streets in some places approach so near to each other that they are united by galleries. Several new houses were built on a very handsome scale, and the town in general had an appearance of prosperity, which is by no means deceitful.'

The following is another detailed description left by another European traveller of the dwelling-house of a Maratha chief situated in Varanasi around 1830,[136] and it gives an idea of the mansions of the noble and rich persons used to live in here :

'At a short distance from the minarets, to the left, the house of Peshwa (?), a Maharatta prince of great wealth, is visible in the accompanying plate (furnished in the book) towering above all the other buildings; it is seven storeys in height and from the terrace on its roof, which is surrounded by a parapet breast high, a prospect as extensive as that from the minarets, may be obtained.

Though there is no garden or pleasure-garden attached to the Peshwa's residence, the building affords a very fair specimen of the habitations of wealthy Hindoos. There are outer windows only on one side, next the street, which contains seven large apartments, rising over each other; the rest of the Chambers open upon covered galleries, surrounding three sides of a small court, and the communication from storey to storey is very curious. A single flight of stairs leads from the lower to the upper apartment, which must be crossed before the next flight can be gained; a mode of constructing a staircase which is often seen in native buildings in India and which suits well with the jealous precautions formerly necessary in the unsettled state of the country. Some of the apartments are furnished with beadsteads peculiar to the Maharattas, a platform of polished wood, slightly curved, suspended from the ceiling at an easy distance from the ground; the panels and pillars of these rooms are of carved wood, and their decorations were composed of rich carpets, and silver vessels, very splendidly wrought.'

Most of these dwelling-houses were six to seven storeys high, each storey being ten to twelve feet. This was possibly due to being pinched for space below. The houses had small courts, round which the rooms were built 'little larger than pigeon holes'.[137] The lower rooms were very dark. The doors were so low, that one would be obliged to stop and then stoop to pass through them. The windows were few and small. In a wall a hundred feet long there were scarcely more than four or five openings. To have little light and air in domestic architecture was perhaps a

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suggestion of the local climate, which was severe and trying, as well in winter as in summer.

European Style Houses

With the advent of the British and their seizing of the reins of the City administration, they felt an exigency to construct new buildings to house their officers and employees. Some of the buildings were also constructed for establishments such as hospitals, schools, police-stations, military barracks, courts, jails, Government offices, etc. These buildings were constructed by local masons under the direction of the British officers. Naturally, they bore features of European schools of architecture, though in some details there were Indian features too. Most of these new constructions were of brick and rarely of stone. The most magnificent and exquisite structure built of stone and modelled in the Gothic school of architecture was Queen's College, constructed in 1852.*

A MEETING PLACE OF DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE

This study of the architectural scene of the City reveals Varanasi to be a meeting place of different schools of Indian, Islamic and European architecture. It is true that the temples and palaces of Varanasi could not compete, in respect of beauty and fineness, with some of their architecturally rich counterparts in India, like Madurai or Udaypur, especially in view of the attacks on the City's more outstanding examples of architecture. Nevertheless, the beauty of the ghats of Varanasi, vibrant with life, paved mostly with Chunar sandstone, with the expanse of huge mansions rising above them and the shimmering water of the Ganga flowing gently and touching them playfully, offered a striking view that was indescribable and unparalleled in the world of architecture.[138] **

SCULPTURE

Though some of the clay, stone, metal and wood artwork of Varanasi reached a high standard of craftsmanship and earned wide repute, the work with regard to sculpture during our period had little to be proud of. Barring a few exceptions, the images of deities made by Banarasi sculptors fell far short of the beautiful specimens in other parts of India. A great majority of the aniconic images here were those of Shiva, symbolically represented by

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* See Chapter XIII—Modern Academies, for further details.

** See Chapter VIII—The Ghats, for further details.

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a mere block of stone, which offered little scope for embellishment. Nevertheless, the figures and designs engraved in wood of the Nepalese Temple, and in stone in the Durga Temple of Ramnagar and the Shiva Temple, built by Raja Jatindramohan Tagore of Bengal, in Dashashwamedh, were really exquisite and the finest examples of sculpture.[139] One can see some other beautiful specimens of sculptures on the outer walls of temples like the Lakshminarayana Temple on the Bhonsla Ghat, for example.

HANDICRAFTS

The study of Varanasi handicrafts with their different dimensions is surely a vast subject. The City has witnessed the growth and development of so many handicrafts which include the following : weaving (silk, cotton and woolen fabrics), dress and costume-making, embroidery of carpet, dying and casting, jewellery, ivory work, wax work, sandalwood work, leather work, toy-making, glass work, clay work, fireworks, brass work, copper work, enamel work on precious metals, stone work, the making of musical instruments and kites.

It is impossible to describe the details of each of these on account of the non-availability of data. However, attempts have been made by modern scholars to throw light on some, such as weaving.[140] A few general observations on this subject now follow :

These handicrafts, most of which had a long tradition in Varanasi, contributed substantially to the richness of Banarasi culture. It is not that each of these handicrafts developed equally, but weaving, embroidery, jewellery, ivory works, brass works and toy-making definitely excelled, especially during this period.

We have already noted while studying occupations in different fields, that some handicrafts were taken up by either Hindus or Muslims exclusively, but others were embraced by both. The censuses of 1803 and 1829 give us an idea of the number of people engaged in some of these handicrafts.[141]

The localization of an industry was observed with most handicrafts. Thus, the Thatheri Bazar area was noted for brass-works, the Chowkhamba area for jewellery, and Haḍha Mahalla for toys, clay works and sculpture.

Banarasi handicrafts were popular and found good markets not only in the City, but also in other parts of the country, and pieces of Banarasi art

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and handicraft were purchased for decoration and even enjoyed by the aristocrats of Europe.[142] Some of these Banarasi products were once sent to the famous Paris Exhibition, where they were received with high appreciation.[143]

FOOD, DRINK AND DELICACIES

From a study of the commodities sold in local markets, of the various occupations in which people were engaged* and also from accounts left by travellers, we get important data on the food and drink habits of the citizens of Varanasi during this period.

Food here was divided into two categories from the point of view of preparation, the *kachhi* and *pakki*.** Among the major foodstuffs consumed were wheat, rice, dal, *jowar*, barley, *kodo*, *bajrah*, *merwa*, vegetables, sugar, salt, *jagri*, oil, ghee, butter, milk (both cow and water buffalo), curd, sweetmeats and *achar*.[144] A wide variety of spices were also used by the people. The main markets for cereals and spices were Trilochan Ganj, Duncan Ganj, Dinanath Gola and Chet Ganj.[145]

Wheat chapatis, rice, dal, vegetables, curd and achar were the main food items, as most of the local Hindus were strictly vegetarian. But a segment of Hindus, especially Bengalees, and all Muslims were non-vegetarians. However, even those non-vegetarian Hindus who took fish, generally refrained from eating meat. Muslims took both fish and meat, including beef, which incurred the resentment of orthodox Hindus. At the outset, Europeans were reluctant to eat beef openly lest they wound the sentiments of the majority, but later on they too consumed meat indiscriminately. In addition to the Machher Hatta, i.e., fish market, and Chick Tola or Kasab Tola, where meats were available, there must have been stalls of fish and meat in other quarters also.

Vegetables usually included potatoes, jackfruit, yams, gourds, *karela*, *patol*, *sakarkand*, brinjal, etc. The vegetables supplied by the *khatiks* and others from the suburbs and hinterlands were sold from a number of vegetable markets such as the Tarkari Bazar in the Dashashwamedh Ward.[146] The most popular fruit was mango and orchards were abundant in and around the City. There were even special markets for mangoes called Umbiya Mandi.[147] Besides mangoes, fruits like papaya, *vilva* and *singara* (water chestnut), and guava were available in great supply here.[148]

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* See Chapter IX—The Economy.

** Further details have been furnished in Chapter V—Social Milieu.

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Morabba, a kind of sweetmeat made of fruit, and preserved fruits were sold in the markets.[149]

Varanasi had developed a proficiency in preparing sweetmeats and different kinds of speciality foods. Though the professionals in this line, called *halwayee*, were concentrated in the Kachowri Gali area, the City was interspersed with numerous sweetmeat shops. In addition to the regular confectioner shops, innumerable small sweetmeat stalls would appear on the occasion of fairs and festivals.[150] It was not only for the people who were so fond of sweetmeats, but they were also made for offering to the deities. Such consumption peaked on special occasions like *Diwali* when confectioners would make elaborate arrangements for selling their wares.[151]

The major ingredients of these sweetmeats were powdered dal, powdered wheat, concentrated milk in the form of *khir* and *khoa*, sugar, oil and ghee (clarified butter). The art of preparing sweets with *chhana*, that is, cottage-cheese, and also of cooking *chachauḍi*, a combination of vegetables, was introduced into the City by Bengalees presumably during this time, when they started visiting here in greater numbers. Jayanarayan, in his *Kashi Parikrama*, furnished a list of sweetmeats sold in Varanasi, which includes :

Laja, *athbhaja*, toys made of sugar in different colours, *jilevi*, *elaichidana, ghee-er batasa, matichur, panitus, khaja, andarsa, laddu* made of the powdered *mung* dal, *perha, barfi, bundia, kunda* made of sugar-candy or sugar, *chhoheri, kachorhi, puri, morabba* and *achar*.[152]

This list does not include items like *rabḍi* which were also special delicacies of Varanasi. Moreover, *lassi*, which is a popular drink today, also must have been a favourite drink in those days.

Varanasi was a haven for addicts of various intoxicants like *charas*, *ganja, bhang*, opium, tobacco in various combined forms, alcohol, *siddhi* and *taḍi*, some of which were easily available in the market.[153] Ganja and bhang, being especially associated with Lord Shiva, the presiding deity of this holy City, were offered to Him regularly,[154] and thus received a special impetus and patronage in Varanasi. They became quite popular among all classes, including a segment of ascetics. Different modes of preparing bhang became an art. Alcohol was regularly manufactured by the *Soodeas* and the *Kalwars* who had colonies of their own.[155] Moreover, varieties of spirituous liquors, called *taḍi* and *derbereh*, were also locally manufactured from the fruit of the palmeyra tree and *keyh* tree respectively.[156] But

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an intoxicant which was of the strongest character was called *majan* (*majun* ?) and was prepared from a combination of bhang, opium, etc., and sugar.[157] The extensive use of these strong intoxicants took its toll on law and order, as well as the health of the City.

The consumption of tobacco, a popular and mild intoxicant, was in the form of *khaini*, *zarda*, snuff, etc. Smoking tobacco from hubble-bubble was also quite common. Consequently, there were many stalls, especially in the Chowk area, selling tobacco of different kinds and hubble-bubble pipes of various designs.*

Chewing betel was, however, the most extensive and popular habit. It was a local custom to receive guests with betel. Varanasi was, as it were, possessed by a love for betel, and stalls could be found everywhere throughout the City. There were also separate big and small betel market-places, like Chhota Paan Dariba and Baḍa Paan Dariba, wherein the *tambolis*, the professional betel sellers, catered to the huge demand of the people.[158] The number of betel stalls would increase along thoroughfares on special occasions like fairs and festivals.

The list of occupations in Chapter IX shows that most of the citizens engaged in the production and sale of foodstuffs were Hindus, and generally the people of specific castes were engaged in specific trades. Muslims prepared only a few food items, the most important being breads; however, these would not be purchased by orthodox Hindus.

If we analyse the food and drink habits of the local people, we observe that while the Hindus and Muslims had some common habits, there were significant differences in customs regarding the preparation and partaking of foods such as meat. When the British appeared on the scene, they obviously imported some of their culture into the City, including their eating and drinking habits. These habits included drinking European wine, brandy, and champagne, smoking tobacco through a hand-held pipe, taking cake, etc. Some of these were adopted by the local people in course of time. The Europeans, in turn, must have also adopted some local food habits as well.

The *annasatras* or alms-houses, generally attached to *dharmashalas*, used to freely distribute cooked food to monks, Brahmins, Sanskrit students and the destitute. These *satras*, though, could not be called public dining places in a modern sense. Pilgrims who would not eat at these

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* An interesting description of such stalls, left by a British lady, has been quoted in Chapter IX.

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satras, or persons visiting the City in connection with some business, presumably availed themselves of the cooking arrangements that must have been available on payment at the dharmashalas or in the houses of the *pandas* where they were put up. In addition to sweetmeat shops, there might also have been some shops selling cooked food to the customers, but modern hotels and restaurants had not yet emerged in the City.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

Travel accounts throw light on the dress, ornaments and toilet accessories used by the citizens. Moreover, a careful study of the occupations, commodities sold in the market and the dress and ornaments made for the deities*, also reveals useful data on this subject. But most important of all the sources of information on dress and ornaments are the portraits of aristocrats, pandas, pandits and ladies, including dancing girls, as well as the pictures of harem scenes, ghats, fairs, etc., left by European artists and by Indian artists belonging to the Company School of Painting.

We get a glimpse of the dress and ornaments of the people of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries from Jayanarayan Ghoshal's description. His account of an early nineteenth century procession of people visiting the Durga Temple on the eve of the great boat-festival of Budhwamangal[159] reveals that people of Varanasi used to wear either a *dhoti* or *pyjama* as lower garments, and *jama* and *uḍani* as upper garments. They also wore turbans and some kind of footware. These garments were of various designs and colours and were made chiefly of cotton, silk and *jari*. They also wore costly ornaments on the neck, ears and arms.

While visiting the City, Mrs Mackenzie and Emily Eden, in view of their high status and womanhood, had the rare privilege of getting access to the harems of two royal houses that were ordinarily inaccessible. One of these houses belonged to the ex-Satara Raj who had settled in Varanasi, and the other to the Raja of Varanasi himself. Hence, their accounts of the harems, especially their descriptions of the dress and ornaments of the ladies of the harem, are very valuable.

Mrs Mackenzie, who visited Raja Pratap Singh, the ex-Satara Raj, records, 'I admired the dress of the ladies which consisted of a very short red jacket with short sleeves, armlets, bracelets, and nose ring, chiefly of

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* See details of Bhonsla temple establishments in Appendix B of Chapter VI.

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pearls, a red drapery embroidered or sprigged with gold, as enveloped the whole person....'[160]

Emily Eden, after her visit to the Ramnagar palace, writes, '...they (the girls) were covered with jewels and dressed in old brocades, some purple and some red, long floating scarfs of gold gauze....'[161]

These brief accounts and other relevant data reveal further that the garments of both men and women included dhoti, *jama*, *pagḍi*, *dopattah*, *kumdeel*, *chirdeea*, *cholee*, shawl, *petambar* silk, *angurakhas*, *panees*, *kufees*, *topee*, *patules* and *ogree*, and the ornaments worn included *bhec balee* (earrings), *kurrah* (bracelets), *kunth* (necklaces), *surpetch* (bangles), *toḍa* (anklets), *mukut* (hair-ornaments), *mangalsutra*, nose rings, *gursolee*, *bajoobund*, *gote* and *pantless*. The ornaments were made of costly stones like diamond, and metals like gold, silver and also glass and wax. Some of these ornaments were also painted.

HAIR STYLES

Contemporary paintings, for example James Prinsep's painting of a Hindu nach-girl or a lady dressing hair in the sleeping apartment of Kashmiri Mall's house, are almost our only source of information on the hair styles of both men and women which had a long tradition here.[162] These various hair styles give a hint of the artistic sense of the Varanasi people.

TOILET ACCESSORIES AND COSMETICS

While many were fond of taking baths in the Ganga or the sacred tanks which were abundant all over the City, there were also people who used to take baths in the wells of their own courtyards or in their neighbourhood. The tradition of well-appointed bathrooms developed only in the houses of the rich.

Toiletries and cosmetics like scented oils, powders, perfumes, *attars*, skin-rubbers, combs, antimony-rods, mirrors, depilatory equipment like razors and ear-cleaners were in vogue during this period. This has been corroborated by the list of occupations and the list of articles available in the shops. It is also quite likely that fashionable people decorated their hair, foreheads, faces, hands and palms. Decorating the palms in different designs with the red juice of particular leaves and the like was one of the common practices among women. Thus, the citizens of Varanasi did not lag behind their counterparts in other cities in fancy and fashion.

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FLOWERS

Pushpavati is one of the many names of the City referred to in the Buddhist *Jatakas*. This suggests that flowers grew profusely in Varanasi and its suburbs even in ancient times. Obviously, these beautiful flowers were used for decoration and in worshipping the deities. The mass production and harvesting of flowers is an unbroken tradition in the City, which continues even today. Mirza Ghalib also referred to the plentiful flowers in his following couplet on Varanasi :[163]

ब-खातिर दारभ इंकि गुल-जमीने
बहार-आई सवाद-ए-दिल-नशीने।

The English translation would read : Varanasi, a city of flowers, as if it were eternal spring, is very dear to the heart.

GAMES, SPORTS AND PASTIMES

In addition to entertainment through different cultural programmes held on the occasion of fairs and festivals, people enjoyed other forms of entertainment like games and sports. The most important and popular of these was wrestling. There were different clubs (*akhaḍas*) set up for the culture of the physique, where wrestling was very common. To devote some time everyday to wrestling and exercises in an akhaḍa was considered to be a very manly pastime. Consequently, akhaḍas sprang up like mushrooms in almost every mahalla. Mutual or prize-wrestling competitions among the members of these akhaḍas and the displays of various physical feats attracted large audiences. Though on some occasions these wrestlers got involved in bloody affrays causing a breach of peace, their show of valour and sacrifice of life for a higher cause when called for drew great appreciation and respect from the public. Consequently, some renowned wrestlers like Lal Khan, Shivnath Singh, Bahadur Singh and Dataram were held in high esteem and regarded as heroes by the people.*

Among the old akhaḍas of the City were Nag Nath ki Baithak, established by Yogi Nagnath, Bhangaḍ Bhikshu ka Akhaḍa in Aitarani-Vaitarani (Shivnath Singh and Bahadur Singh belonged to this akhaḍa), and Swaminath ka Akhaḍa at Tulsi Ghat. Other akhaḍas included; one in Rajmandir near Vriddhakal and another in Ramkunda; Babua Pandey ka Akhaḍa in Pandey Haoli; Santaram ka Akhaḍa and Ajit Singh ka Akhaḍa

* See Chapter XX—Civil Movement.

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in Ishwargangi; Kon Bhatta ka Akhaḍa near Bibihatia and Rajju Nalband ka Akhaḍa. In the last mentioned akhaḍa, only Muslim wrestlers were eligible to be members.[164]

Horse-cart races and boat races were also popular amusements, which created great excitement among spectators. Such races sometimes caused serious accidents too. Other traditional pastimes like archery, fireworks, kite-flying, and pigeon-flying were also quite popular in Varanasi.[165] *Khimir*-gaming(?), though prohibited by the Government,[166] was also practised.

MAUJ-MASTI AND *ANASAKTI*

The richness and multi-dimensional character of its cultural life brought Varanasi the admirable position of the cultural capital of India. In reality, the whole nineteenth century was the golden period for Banarasi culture, which, while retaining fully its traditional character, flourished freely, being enriched by some welcome additions from the West.

In the beginning of this period, Banarasi culture contained elements from both Hindu and Muslim cultural traditions. This was possible in view of a silent and subtle fusion of the Hindu and Muslim traditions over a long period of time. With the advent of the British, Banarasi culture started absorbing elements of Western culture too. But the cultural traditions of the West were so different from those of the East and the time of exposure so relatively short, the present study being confined to the nineteenth century only, that the assimilation of the Western culture was comparatively slight. At every level—painting, dress and cosmetics, food and drink-elements of Western culture could be distinguished *prima facie* from their Indian components. Thus, though strictly speaking, Banarasi culture during this period contained elements of the Hindu, Muslim and European cultures, on a popular level, only Hindu and Muslim cultural traditions have been generally recognized as major components of the local culture. It was these two streams of culture that mingled and gave Banarasi culture its richness and fame.

Finally, Banarasi culture held a special meaning, especially for those who were nurtured by it. It symbolized a way of life, characterized by the twin features of *mauj* and *masti*. These terms are best explained by a veteran Banarasi in the following language :[167]

> '*Mauj* epitomises all that goes by the generic terms : enjoyment, conviviality, festivity, jollity, gaity, and other similar ideas, while *masti* envisages contentment,

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serenity, placidity, tranquillity, exhileration, geniality, buoyancy, self-esteem, heartiness, and even recklessness and wayward obstinacy.'

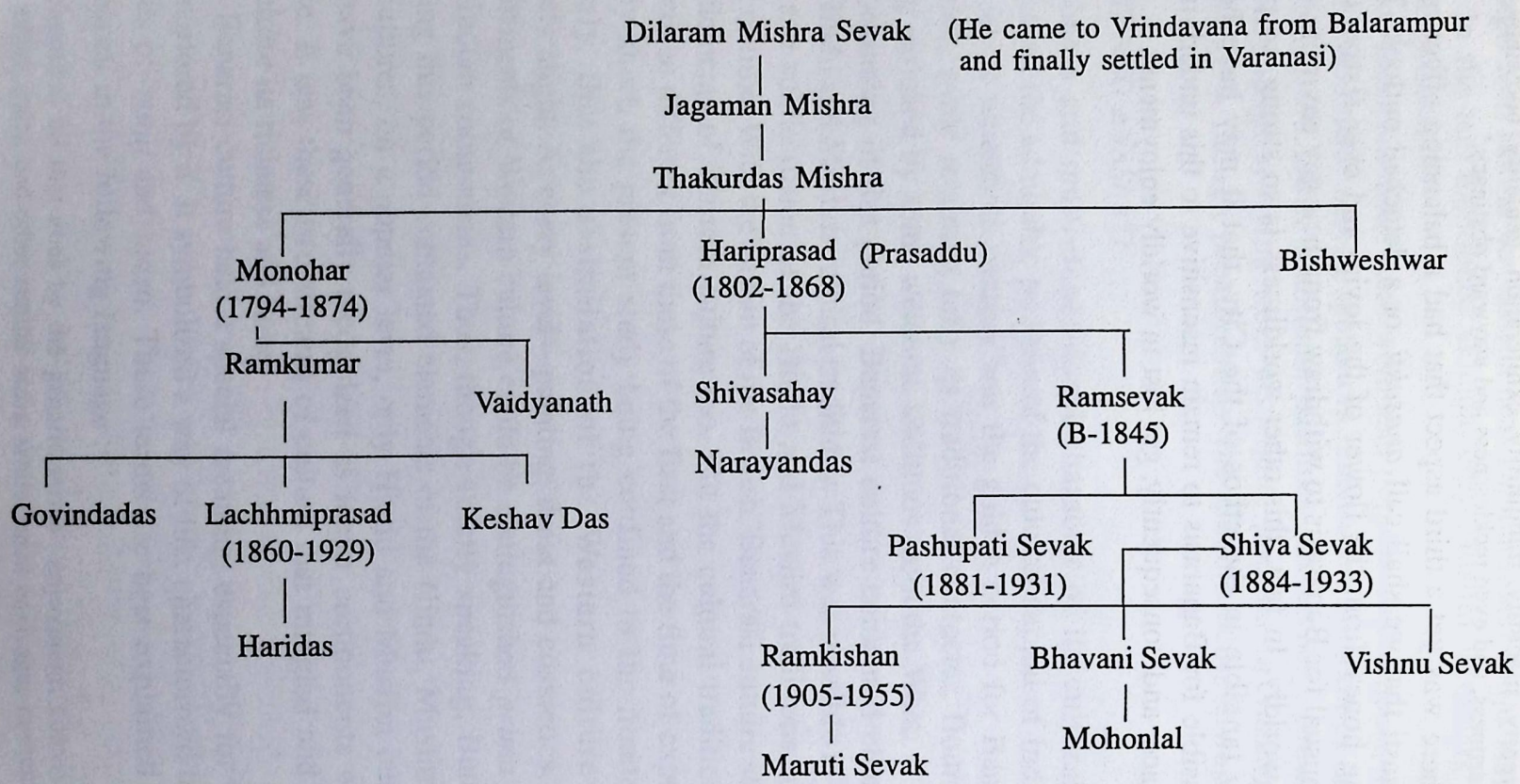
There was yet a third aspect that had a balancing effect on this mauj and masti that we shall call *anasakti*, or a detached outlook. Thus, while sipping honey from the flower of the jovial and ever-festive City, it was not unusual for Banarasis to withdraw from their gay environs and become other-worldly. In fact, this other-worldliness is so strong, so palpable, so nearly tangible in the ethos of the City, that it may have been almost impossible for Banarasis to remain insensitive to this underlying spirit of the place, and consequently, get lost in worldly enjoyments.

APPENDIX : A

Family trees *

Vocal Music

Prasuddu-Manohar Gharana



* For family trees and other details of the musicians, see Bimalakanta Raychaudhuri, *Bharatiya Sangit Kosha* and Dilip Kumar Mukhopadhyay, *Bharatiya Sangit Gharanar Itihas*.

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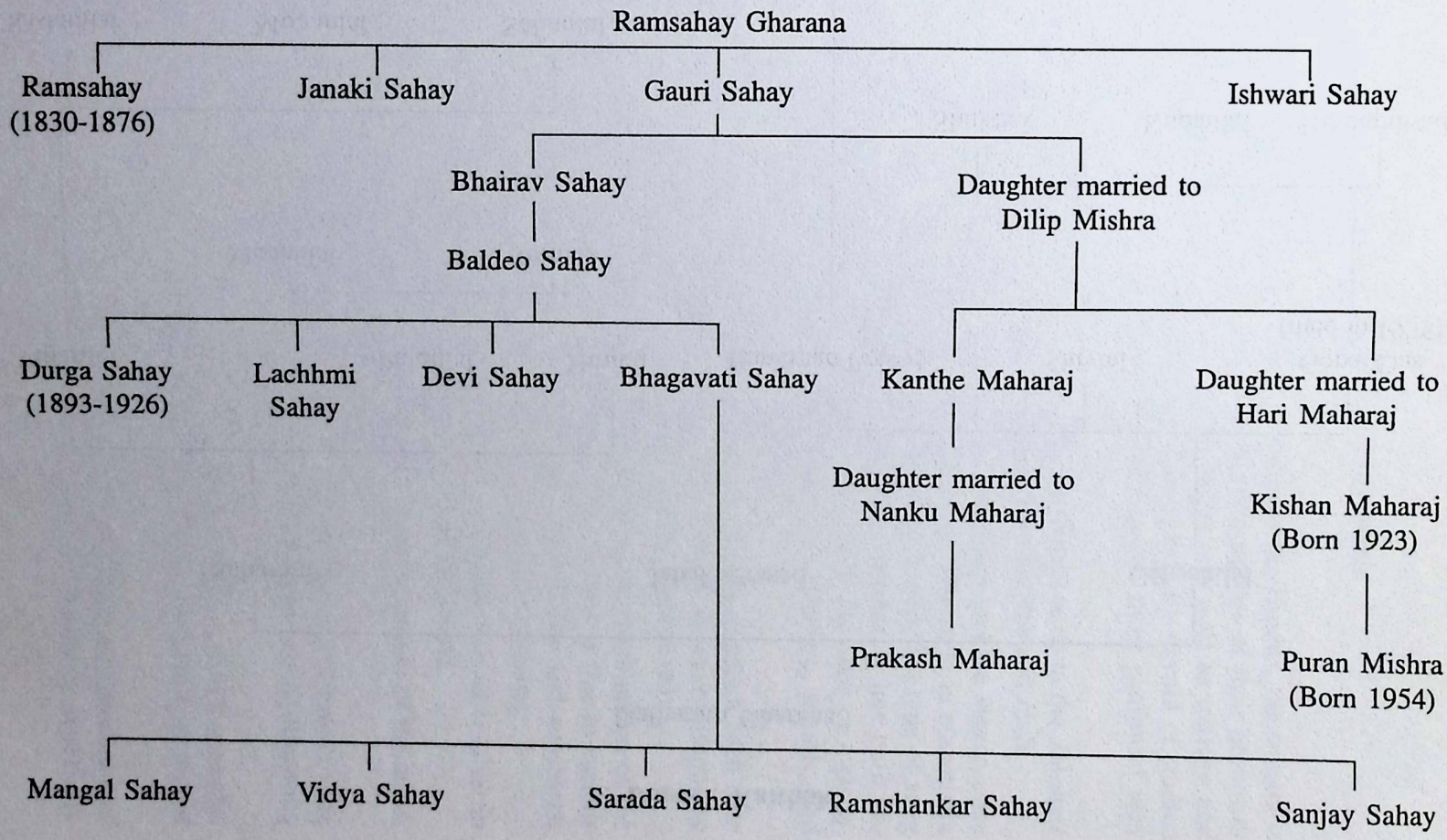
Instrumental Music : Tabla

Tabla : There were numerous gharanas of Tabla in the City but most famous of them was Ramsahay Gharana.



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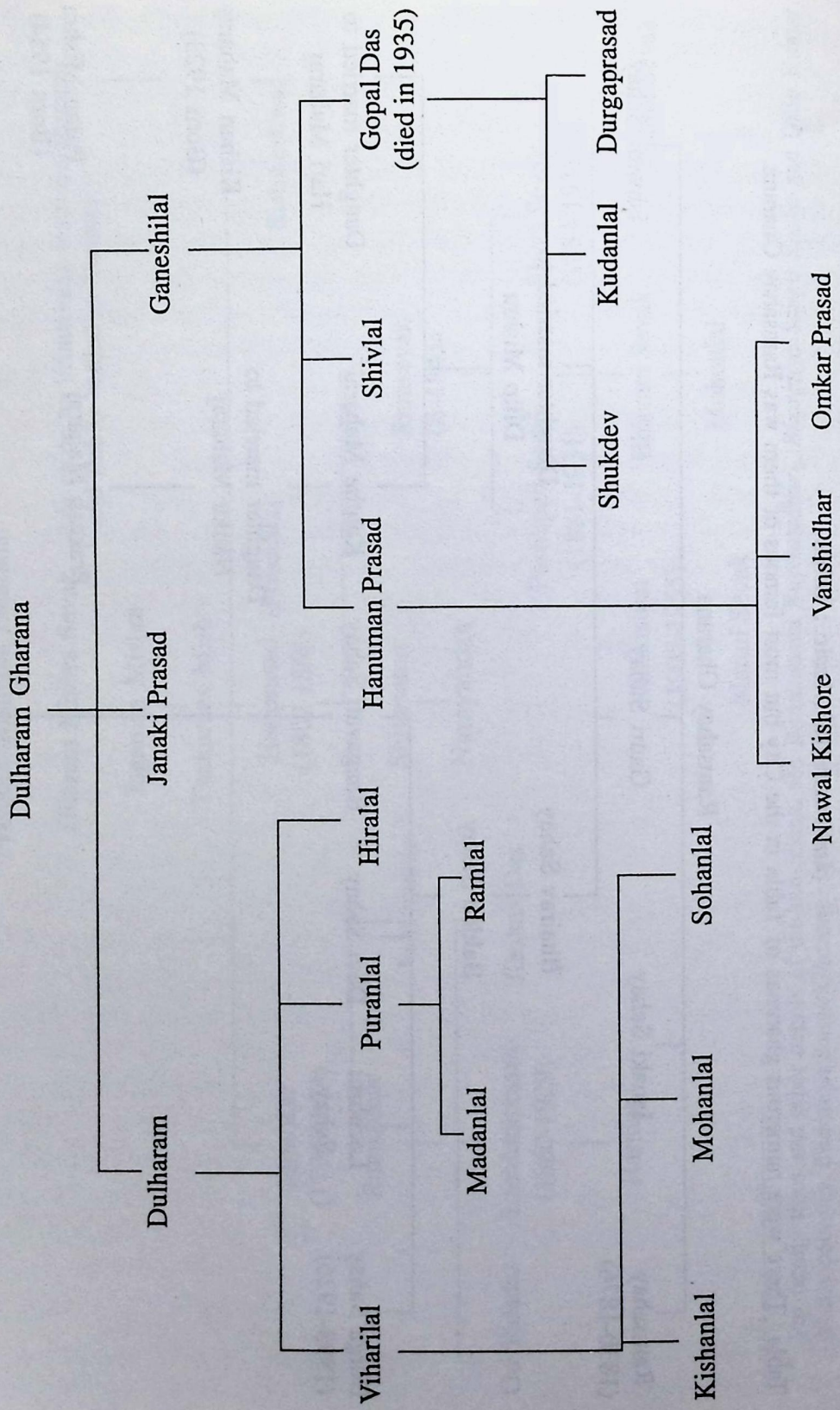
Dance : Katthak



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APPENDIX : B

Explanatory Notes on Indian Music

Songs

Dhrupad (Dhruva-pada) : Ancient heroic songs of the Hindus, the subject is often the serious and serene recital of the memorable actions of their heroes or other didactic theme. It also engrosses love matters as well as trifling and frivolous subjects. The style is masculine and almost entirely devoid of studied ornamental flourishes. The *ragas* are expressed in the most profound way through *Dhrupad*.

Dhamar : This is a light form of *Dhrupad* and always sung in the *Dhamar* rhythm. The *Pakhawaji* drum is played with Dhrupad, Dhamar and *Holi*.

Khayal : In *Khayal*, the subject generally is a love tale and the singer, once only a female, later could be performed by either sex. The style is essentially graceful, studded with elegance and embellishments. It is said, this type of song was invented by the Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur. It has both the pathos of the poetry and the intricately woven delicacy of the *soor* or melody. Another dimension of Khayal is its long reaching, creative, mystic and penetrating abstraction in the sphere of sound itself.

Tappa : This is an extremely variegated style of singing in which each note of the Dhrupad prototype is tastefully ornamented without, however, imposing upon the overall melody. *Tappa* songs are usually set in *madhya tala*.

Thumri : This is an exotically mellifluous and romantic combination of the Khayal and Tappa studded with *gamaks*. It repeats each word or line in various styles focusing on particular aspects of the song. Very lively and sensuous, *Thumri* can be used as background music for pantomime and dancing.

Dadra : Based on popularized versions of classical songs, this style is set in *Dadra* rhythm or *tala* of folk music. It originated in Bundelkhand.

Telena : This is a type of melody dependent on the vital strokes of the drum, which rhythmically ascends or descends with the *bol*.

Ghazal : This type of song originated in Persia. Nowadays, it is mainly sung in the Urdu language. Its contents are love-lyrics of light and exhilarating moods.

Bhajan : These songs have devotional themes with a fixed melody. Accompanied by rhythmic instruments they are often composed in mixed (*mishra*) *ragas*.

Kirtan : Similar to Bhajan, *Kirtan* renderings form a continued succession of religious themes with changes in mood, *raga* and *tala*. Kirtan is especially developed in Bengal.

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Kajari : This is sung during the monsoon period of North India. Through this type of folk melody the exponent draws images of the wet, humid, sultry and sad aspects of the season. The texture of this type of music is frail but full of life.

Holi : Basically folk songs, they are sung all over North India during the *Vasant* (Spring) season. A mixture of happy and hilarious textures, the moods are essentially gay, humorous and erotic.

Chaiti : This style follows the *Holi* season of folk music. During the drier part of the Spring season when humidity is completely absent, dry, hot winds, called *loo*, blow from the Western desert of Rajasthan, completely changing the former lush aura of the *Holi* season. *Chaitis* dwell on the past glories of and future return to the haven of lushness.

Biraha, Purvi, Lavani : These are current in the wide Gangetic delta-plains of Eastern U. P. and Bihar. The songs are mostly composed in the *Brajabhasha* dialect of North India. The proximity to Bengal is an important factor as far as the intermingling of folk melodies of both the areas are concerned. These types of songs usually focus on the diurnal episodes of love-romance in the rural pockets spread over the vast Gangetic hinterland.

Dance

Khemta : This is a form of popular dance based on romantic love in which a specially rapid three beat rhythm is used for expressing youthful exuberance in voluptuously attractive postures.

Garba : This is a Northwestern folk dance of India. Male and female dancers, in a wide circle with two short batons in hand, step in graceful movements striking the batons to create the desired rhythms. This is a very graceful dance accompanied with songs.

Bhangra : This is a male folk dance of the Punjab region. Men in heroic dress dance vigorously in wide circles brandishing swords, shields, etc., in a rhythmic manner with occasional shouts in the names of the heroes or religious leaders they portray. It is a very gorgeous and exhilarating dance.

Musical instruments

Veena : This instrument seems to have had its first mention in the Vedas. In *Ashvamedha Yajna*, the Rishis used the *Veena* while chanting the Vedic Mantras. In the *Ramayana*, there were countless instances where the Veena has been referred to. Veena is the instrument of Saraswati, the Goddess of Music and Learning. There are various types of Veena. For example, in the *Mahaveena*, grass was used as strings and the body was made of bamboo. Grass later gave way to gut and finally to metal strings. The *Saraswati Veena*, for the first time,

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had a *tumba* fixed below the finger board, with another tumba added still later.

Sitar : This is an improved version of theVeena. Amir Khusro, a courtier of Alauddin Khilji in the fourteenth century, was the creator of the Sitar, which is smaller and lighter than the Veena. Originally the instrument had three strings and fourteen frets and eleven 'sympathetic' strings were added later. By the end of the nineteenth century, it developed into an instrument of seven strings and nineteen frets. Its sweet clink and melodious sound enchants audiences and has become the most popular instrument of contemporary India.

Sarod : This is made on the same principles as the *Rabav* with some modifications. Made of wood and between 90 cm. to 100 cm. in length, it has a leather or parchment covered belly and six main strings with no frets. The finger board is a polished metal plate and is played with a plectrum. It has a solemn, yet, mellifluously rich tone. The typical *meerh* or glissando, so essential in classical Indian music, is effectively produced by the Sarod.

Tambura : One of the most popular classical stringed instruments, it is used for drone accompaniment with a vocalist and an instrumental artist. A product of Middle-eastern countries, it came to India with the Muslim settlers. *Tamburas* are made of jackwood or hollowed-out gourds. The measurement of the *tumba* (gourd) varies from 25 cm. to 50 cm. and the total length varies from 1 metre to 1.25 metre. Its belly is convex and the bridge is made of wood, ivory or animal bones.

Sarangi : It is a prominent stringed instrument of India and has been popular as a folk instrument for centuries. It can effortlessly produce all types of *gamak* or vibrato, *taan* or creative embellishments and the *alapkari* or pianissimo, slow but serene melodies of all the *ragas* and *raginis*. The Sarangi is about 60 cm. long and made of a single block of carved out wood with a leather covered belly. It has three main strings and an extra brass one for drone. The tone of this instrument is close to human vocal chords, hence for vocalists, especially female singers, it is an ideal accompaniment.

Pakhawaj : In classical music it was used as an accompaniment with *Dhrupad* and *Dhamar* resembling the *Mridang*. But to harmonize it with every pitch, high and low, it was essential to add gut to help the players in tuning the instrument, because the body of Mridang did not posses the capacity to bear the pressure and tensions of gut; hence, the barrel of *Pakhawaj* is made a bit thicker than that of Mridang. Another difference between the Mridang and the Pakhawaj is the circumference of the leather covered ends. The *puḍas* of the Pakhawaj are wrapped with bamboo rings, and the hides on both sides are tightened with leather straps. The player plays the instrument by slapping both sides.

Turi and Bheri : These are long metal horns, mainly of copper, that are actually some kinds of trumpets.

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Shehnai : It is also called *Mangala Vadya* or auspicious instrument. It originated from the Persian *Nai* and was played in the proximity of ancient tombs. It is a one-reed instrument with six holes yielding soft and melodious sounds. Played before the Persian Shah, this came to be called *Shehnai* later. It has the following parts :

A reed made of *pala* grass; an ivory needle used for tying the grass reed; a mouth piece of ivory or wood to help the lips while blowing air; a wooden tube made of black wood; and a cup made of metal or wood.

Technical terms of classical music :

Nada	:	Musical sound
Chala	:	Style of presentation
Tana	:	Ornamentation, embellishment
Tala	:	Time, beat
Laya	:	Rhythm—*Vilambit* : slow; *Madhya* : medium; *Drut* : fast.
Tali	:	Clapping of hands
Khali	:	Silent beat
Matra	:	Beat (one second time)
Raga	:	Tune
Ragini	:	Mixed melody with the *raga* base
Raga Alap	:	Improvisation of *raga*
That	:	Scale
Aroha	:	Ascent
Avaroha	:	Descent
Pakarh	:	Dominating notes of *ragas*
Sthayi	:	Initial part of the tune or song
Antara	:	Second part of the tune or song
Sama	:	Starting point of the *tala*
Meeḍ	:	Vibrato
Shruti	:	Microtonic interval
Swara	:	Note—*Vadi Swara* : King note; *Samvadi Swara* : Harmonic note; *Vivadi Swara* : Dissonant note; *Varjita Swara* : Omitted note.
Saptaka	:	Octave—*Atimandra* : Double lower octave; *Mandra* : Lower octave (Bass clef); *Mahdya* : Medium octave; *Tara* : Upper octave.

Percussion terms :

Theka	:	Basic; fixed beats of different rhythms
Paran	:	Repetition of *Pakhwaji* rhythms with strong accent on certain beats
Ladi	:	Double, treble or extremely fast rendering of the basic beats

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Chhanda : Division of rhythms
Alamkar : Embellishment; ornamentation
Tihai : Repeating three times starting either at *sama* or *khali* and merging with the main body without any rhythmic problem

Miscellaneous terms :

Ustad : A preceptor of music (generally, a Muslim)
Tablia : Player of Tabla

A list of Talas :

Chowtal (12 matra)
Dadra (6 matra)
Dhamar (19 matra)
Ektal (12 matra)
Jhamptal (10 matra)
Kaharva (8 matra)
Trital (16 matra)
Teora (7 matra)

List of Ragas :

Day :

1st quarter (6 a.m. - 9 a.m.)
Bhairav
Bhairavi
Ramkeli
Yogiya

2nd Quarter (9 a.m. - 12 noon)
Ashabari
Jaunpuri
Bilawal
Toḍi

3rd quarter (12 noon - 3 p.m.)
Bhimapalashri
Multani
Shri
Malavashri

4th Quarter (3 p.m. - 6 p.m.)
Puravi
Puriya
Gauri
Marava

Night :

1st quarter (6 p.m. - 9 p.m.)
Yaman
Kalyan
Bhupali
Darabari Kanada

2nd Quarter (9 p.m. - 12 p.m.)
Sahana
Bageshri
Bahari
Jayjayanti

3rd quarter (12 p.m. - 3 a.m.)
Hindol
Behag Khambaj
Pilu Barwan
Malkosh

4th Quarter (3 a.m. - 6 a.m.)
Sohini
Lalit
Shankara

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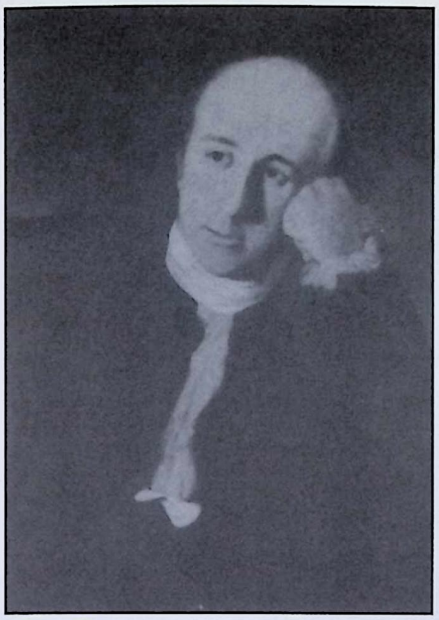
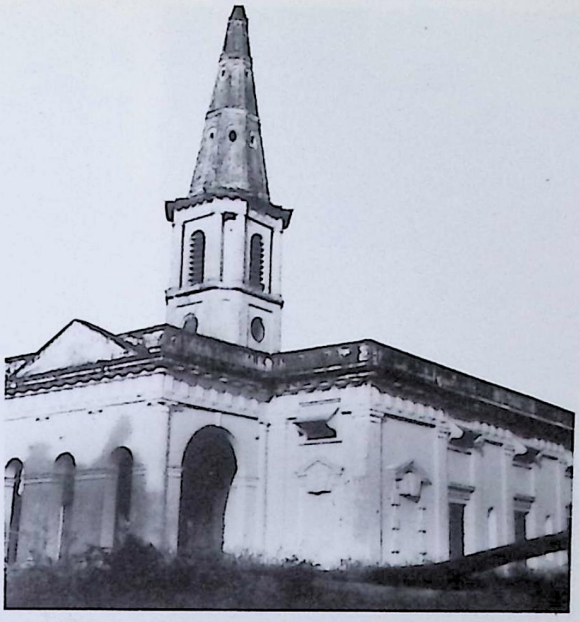
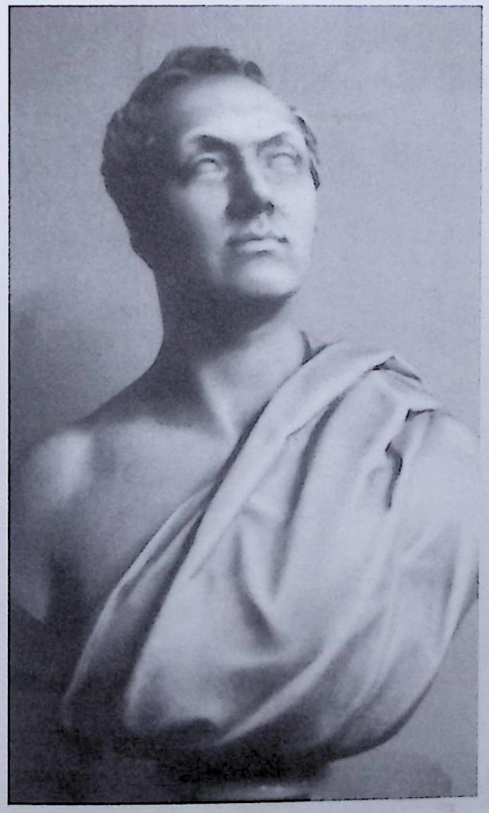


49. Governor-General Warren Hastings



50. St. Mary's Church



51. James Prinsep, the Assay Master of Benares

52. Reverend Nehmiah Goreh

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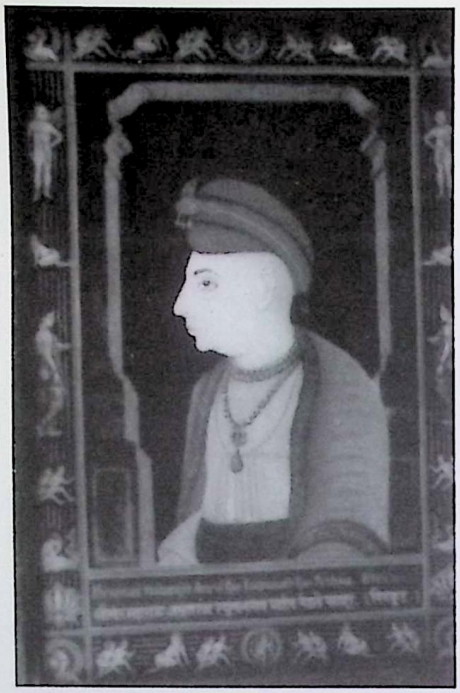

53. Raja Amrita Rao Peshwa

54. Nawab Wazid Ali Shah

55. Maharaja Jayanarayan Ghoshal

56. Nawab Saadat Ali

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57. Amrita Rao Peshwa's residence

58. Tomb of Prince Jawan Bakht

59. Well at Nawab Saadat Ali's residence

60. Tomb of Ali Hazi,
the Persian poet

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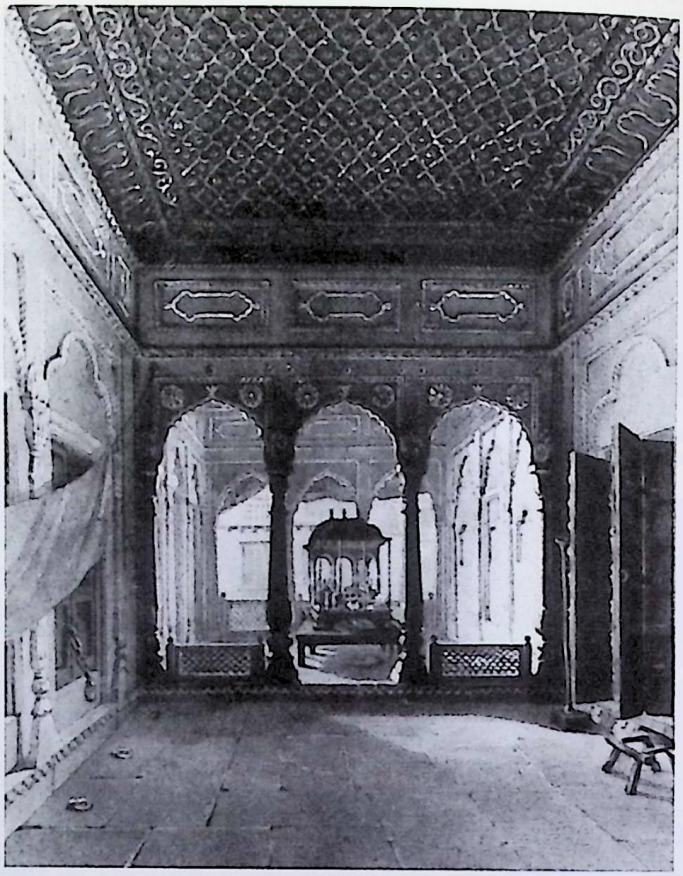
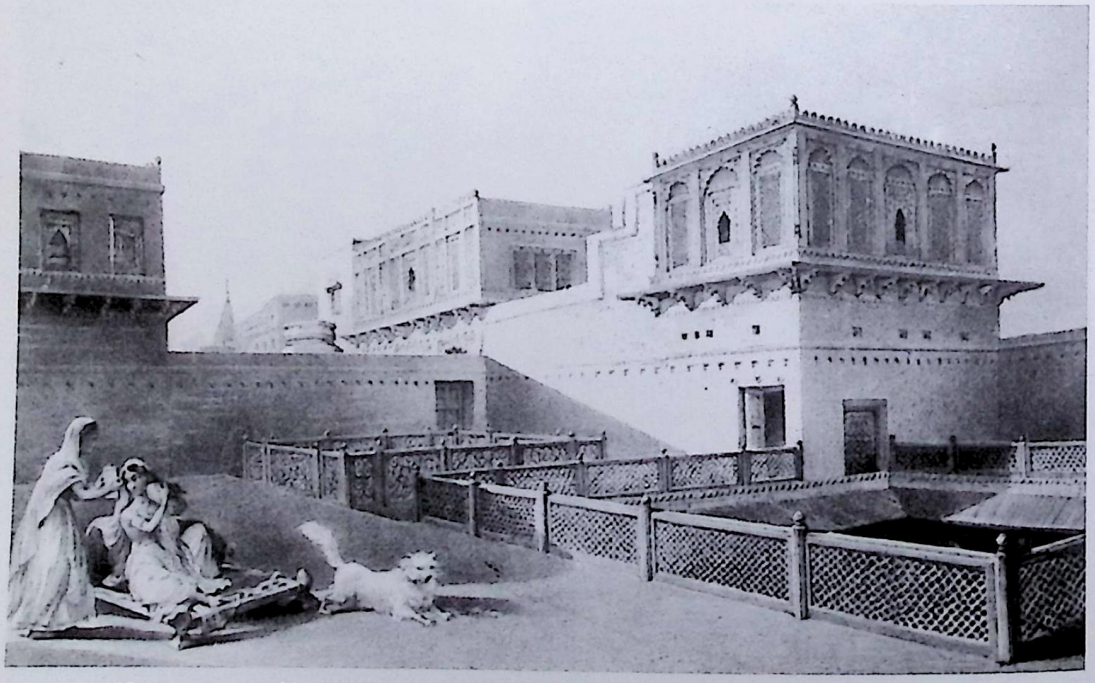


61. Family shrine at Lala Kashmiri Mall's residence : James Prinsep, 1831



62. A scene of harem at Kashmiri Mall's residence : James Prinsep, 1831

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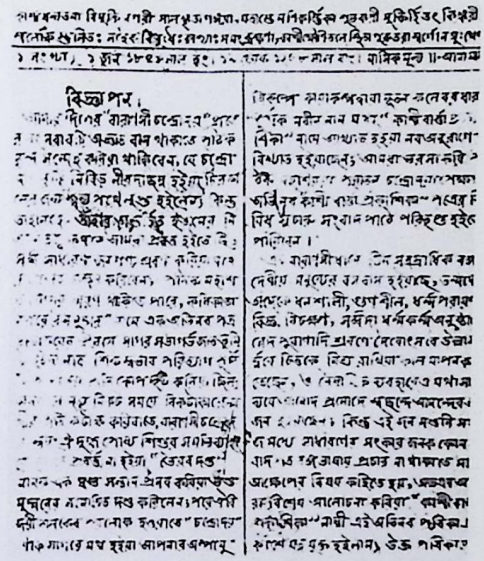
63. The Bapulis' house, sanctified by the presence of Sri Ramakrishna

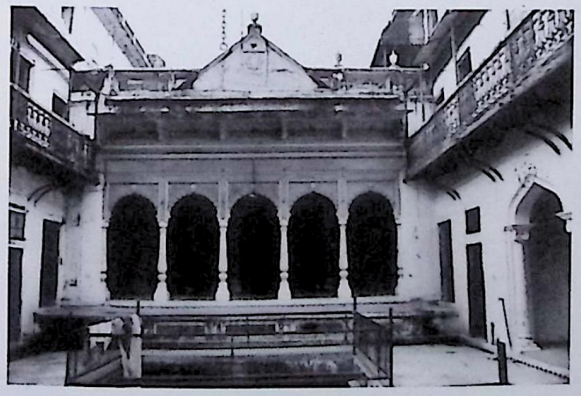


কাশীবার্ত্তাপ্রকাশিকা

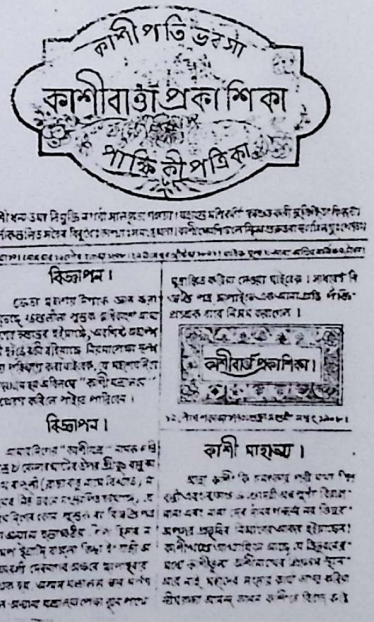
পাক্ষিক পত্র।

বিজ্ঞাপন।

64. First page of the first issue of the *Kashivartaprakashika,* June 1, 1851



65. Interior of the Mitras' house at Chowkhamba



কাশীপতি ভরসা

কাশীবার্ত্তাপ্রকাশিকা

পাক্ষিকীপত্রিকা

বিজ্ঞাপন।

বিজ্ঞাপন।

কাশী মাহাত্ম্য।

66. Notices in the *Kashivartaprakashika,* one of the notices informs that Kalinath Bapuli was known as Raja Babu

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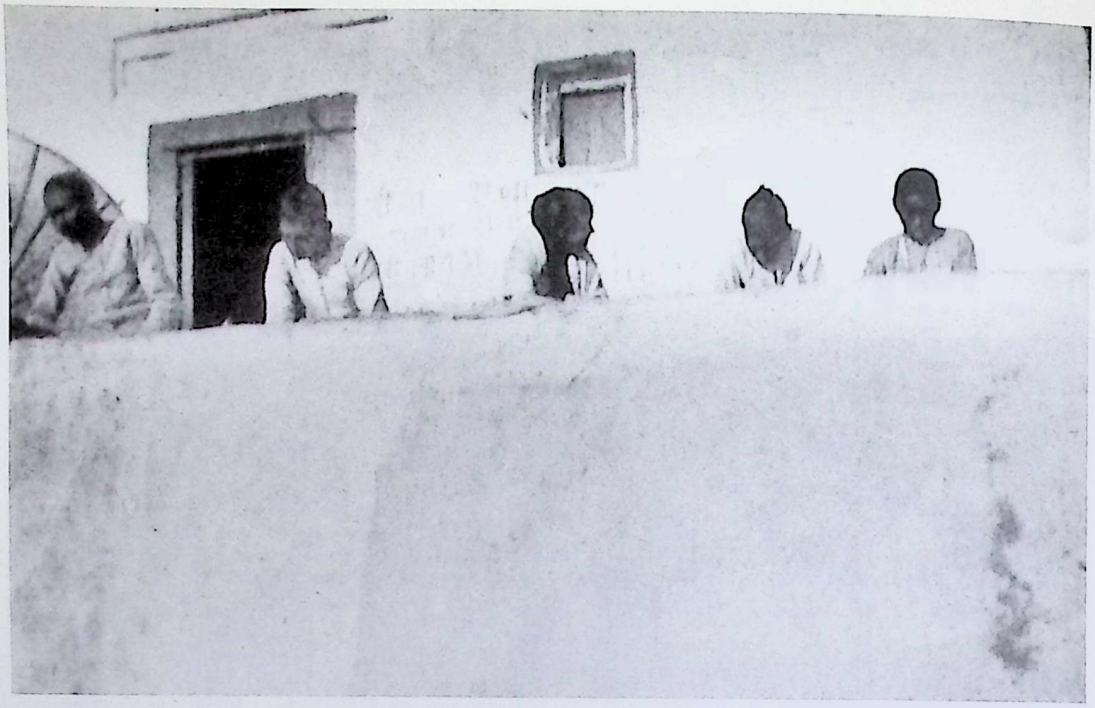

67. A 'tol' (Sanskrit school) : E. B. Havell, 1905

68. The oldest building (1818) of the Jaynarayan School

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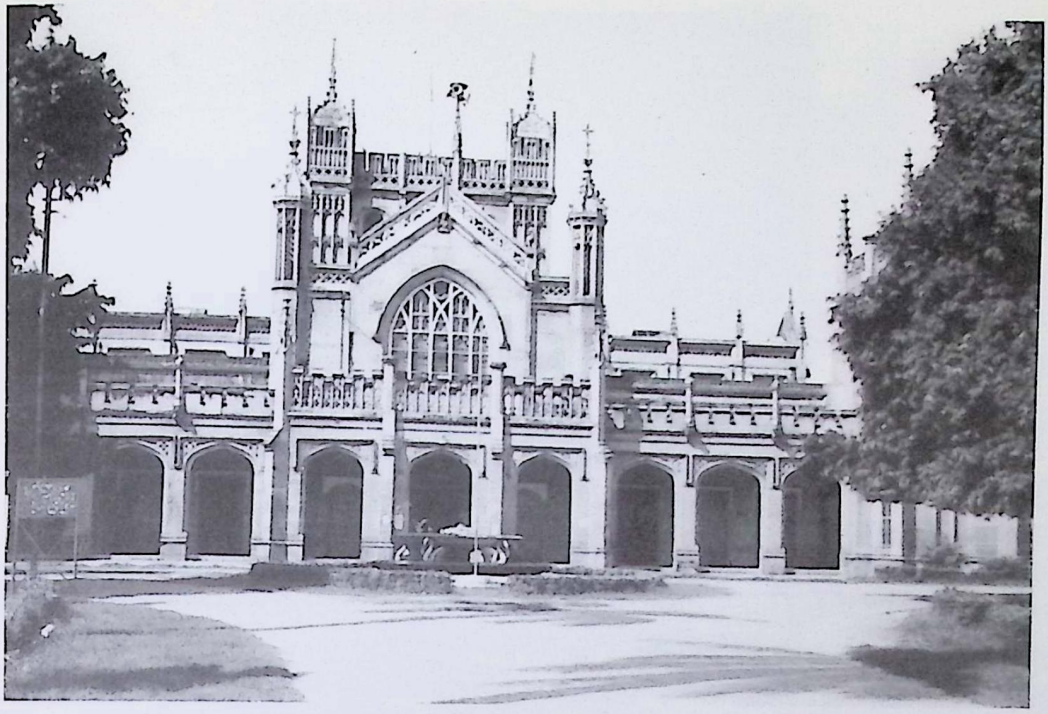

69. Queen's College (The Benares Sanskrit College)

70. Principal J.R. Ballantyne

71. Pandit Bapudeva Shastri

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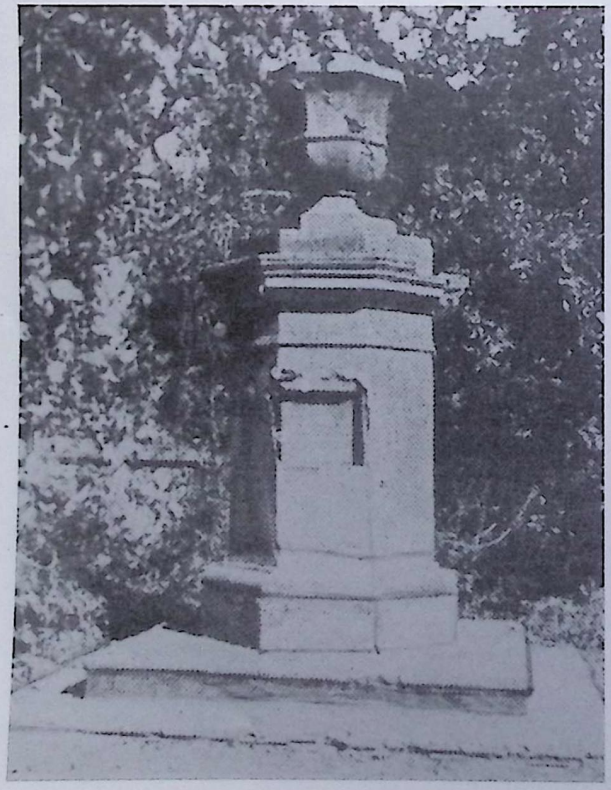
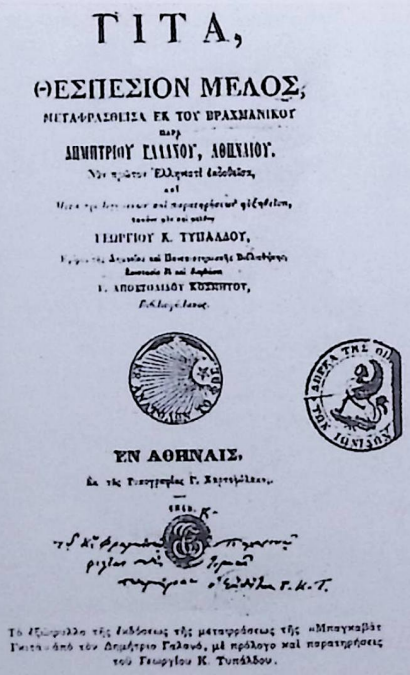
72. Demetrius Galanos : the Greek Indologist



73. The tomb of Galanos



ΓΙΤΑ,

ΘΕΣΠΕΣΙΟΝ ΜΕΛΟΣ,

ΜΕΤΑΦΡΑΣΘΕΙΣΑ ΕΚ ΤΟΥ ΒΡΑΧΜΑΝΙΚΟΥ

παρ'

ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΓΑΛΑΝΟΥ, ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΥ.

Νυν πρώτον Ἑλληνικοῖς ἐκδοθεῖσα,

καὶ

ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ Κ. ΤΥΠΑΛΔΟΥ,

Ι. ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΔΟΥ ΚΟΣΚΙΝΟΥ,

ΕΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΣ,

Ἐκ τῆς Τυπογραφίας Γ. Χαρτοφύλακος.

Το πρωτότυπο της εκδόσεως της μεταφράσεως της «Μπαγκαβάτ Γκιτα» από τον Δημήτριο Γαλανό, με πρόλογο και παρατηρήσεις του Γεωργίου Κ. Τυπάλδου.

74. Cover page of Galanos's translation of *Bhagavad Gita* into Greek : published in 1848

Digitization by Arya Samaj Charitable Foundation, Chennai

CHAPTER XVI

THE BENGALEES AND VARANASI

BENGAL'S CLOSENESS WITH VARANASI

Peoples from different provinces of India migrated to Varanasi and enriched it with their respective religious and cultural heritage. Among them, the contributions of the Gahadavalas, Rajputs and Marathas were conspicuous during the Early Medieval, Medieval and Late Medieval periods respectively, while in the Early Modern period, the contributions of the Bengalees were especially spectacular.

The establishment of the British Raj in Bengal and the foundation of Calcutta as its capital brought Bengalees in close contact with the British and, through them, with Western culture and civilization. Having utilized that contact in the fields of administration, business and trade, a segment of the Bengalee society flourished. Besides this, some basic character traits of the Bengalees, complemented by the acquisition of Western education, induced many to play a pioneering role in the religious, social, cultural, educational, and finally, the political history of this country during the Modern Age.

Bengal apart, Bengalees preferred Varanasi most as a place of residence among all places of India. Consequently, the number of Bengalee residents of the City was quite large.[1] Even today, visitors to Varanasi will not fail to come across multitudes of Bengalees in the streets of the City, listen to Bengali dialogue and notice tablets in Bengali in temples with the names of Bengalee donors inscribed on them.

The Bengalees reside here in a big colony called Bangali Tola or Bengali Tola. This colony, which is about two square miles in area, stretches from the Dashashwamedh Ghat to the Harishchandra Ghat and includes Ganesh Mahalla, Deonathpura, Pataleshwar, Haḍarbag, Ranamahal, Khalispura, Munshi Ghat, Pandey Haoli, Pandey Ghat, Gangamahal, Narad Ghat, Chaushatti Ghat, Mansarovar, Kedar Ghat, Harishchandra Ghat, etc. Bengalees also live in the area extending from the west of Godaulia to Luxa, and also in Ramapura, Sonarpura, Shivala,

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Bhadaini, etc. It is mostly in these areas that hundreds of Bengalee houses are still found and the traces of many large and small temples and *satras*, once run by Bengalees, are also noticeable.[2]

A good deal of Bengali literature from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contain profuse references to Varanasi. This is literary proof of Bengal's close relation with Varanasi. Guidebooks and travel accounts on Varanasi written in Bengali form the largest number of all such books written in the regional languages of India. Again, while Bengali authors like Latika Devi, Manmatha Chakravarti and Kedarnath Bandyopadhyay wrote monographs on Varanasi,[3] famous Bengalee writers like Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay and Bibhuti Bhushan Bandyopadhyay referred to the City in many of their novels and stories. For instance, Bibhuti Bhushan in his classic novel, *Pather Panchali*, devoted a large number of pages to describe how Harihar, a poor Bengalee Brahmin and the father of Apu, the hero, had left his ancestral home in Bengal and migrated to Varanasi to seek new avenues of income, struggled hard for a bare subsistence and, finally, succumbed there, leaving his family in utter distress. Kedarnath wrote a satire on life in Varanasi, especially that of the Bengalees, entitled *Kashir Kinchit*, under the pen name *Nandisharma*. Poets like Satyendranath Datta, Jatindramohan Bagchi, Gorachand Mukhopadhyay and Balaichand Mukhopadhyay (Banaphul) also wrote beautiful poems on Varanasi.

Bengali magazines of the nineteenth century used to publish two types of information relating to Kashi/Varanasi, one on Bengalees in Kashi and the other on Kashi itself.[4] Thus, Bengali literature has become one of the important indigenous sources of the history of the City during this period. The importance given to Kashi by the Bengali Press in comparison with other cities shows that news of Kashi was read with great interest by readers in Bengal. Magazines and books were published in Bengali from Kashi from the middle of the nineteenth century. This indicates further that Bengalees not only formed a sizeable community in Varanasi, but that they also were a progressive and cultured one, much like their counterparts in Calcutta. Disputes over social and religious issues were usually referred to the pandits of Kashi for their learned opinions from different parts of India including Bengal. From the 30 April 1836 issue of *Samachar Darpan*, a Bengalee newspaper published in Calcutta, we come to know that the subject of taking a sea-voyage and its bearing on the caste system was referred by some Bengalee pandits to the pandits of Kashi.

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The participation of Brahmins and pandits of Kashi on various occasions such as *shraddha* (funeral rites), *yajnas* (sacrifices), *shastrarthas* (disputations), etc. was a great honour everywhere in the country, including Bengal. It was always considered prestigious for hosts to invite Kashi pandits on such occasions. In the shraddha ceremony of Ramdulal Sarkar, father of Ashutosh Dev Sarkar, a Bengalee aristocrat of Calcutta, money was spent lavishly and invitations were sent to the pandits of Kashmir, Sourashtra, Maharashtra, Kanchi, Kanyakubja and, also, of Kashi in 1825.[5] Kaliprasanna Mukhopadhyay, the *zamindar* of Govardanga, then situated in the Nadia District of Bengal, also invited pandits of Kashi on the occasion of his mother's half yearly shraddha ceremony in 1833.[6]

Banarasi sarees (Varanasi silk saris) were generally worn by Bengalee brides during marriage ceremonies. Nrisingha Deva Roy employed the masons of Varanasi for constructing the symbolic temple of Hamseshwari at Bansberia in Hooghly in Bengal. There is a proverb in Bengali, *Vrindavane bhajan, Purite bhojan, Kashite shayan*. This means that performing spiritual practices, partaking of the *mahaprasad* and passing away in Vrindavan, Puri and Kashi respectively, would lead one to liberation from this world. Accordingly, Bengalees frequented these three places in larger numbers than other pilgrim centres of India and, again, among these, Kashi seemed to be the most favoured and most frequented.

EARLY HISTORY OF BENGAL'S RELATION WITH VARANASI

In the absence of records, it cannot be known exactly when Bengalees, as a community, started settling in Varanasi. Possibly, relations between Bengal and Varanasi were first established in the time of King Shashanka of Gauḍ, or Bengal, in 606 AD, when he brought Kanauj under him by vanquishing the Vardhana king. Kashi, being a part of Kanauj, was automatically annexed to the empire of Shashanka.[7] It was during this campaign to take Kanauj that Shashanka had to first invade Kashi and set up a military camp, as an invasion of Kanauj from Bengal was possible only through Kashi. When Shashanka was away from his capital of Karnasuvarna during this campaign, Bhaskaravarman of Kamrup, a friend of King Harshavardhan and a resolute enemy of Shashanka, invaded Karnasuvarna. This compelled Shashanka to return to Karnasuvarna and Harshavardhan seized this opportunity to take back Kanauj.

In the eighth century, Chakrayudha was ousted from the throne of

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Kanauj by Indraraja with the help of Vatsaraja, the Gurjara Pratihara King. Then, at the insistence of the Gauḍ (Bengalee) Brahmins of Kashi, Chakrayudha petitioned Dharmapala, the famous second Pala Emperor of Gauḍ (770-810 AD), for help in the recovery of his lost kingdom. Finally, with Dharmapala's military assistance, Chakrayudha managed to recover both Kashi and Kanauj.[8] It was on this occasion that Dharmapala himself led his army, stayed at Kashi for a considerable time and set up a cantonment there for lending support to Chakrayudha. This presumably initiated the close relations of the Pala emperors of Bengal with Varanasi. Though most of the Pala emperors were Buddhists, they were tolerant of other religions too. Narayana Pala, the fifth Pala emperor (858-904), who was a *Shaiva*, was said to have constructed a thousand Shiva temples in Varanasi. Mahipala, the ninth Pala emperor (988-1027), also constructed many temples here. An inscription, discovered in Saranath, reads that Sthirapala and Vasantapala constructed the temples of Ishaneshwara, Chitraghanta and many such temples by the order of Emperor Mahipala.[9] It has been held by some scholars that the goddess Chitraghanta, installed by Sthirapala and Vasantapala, is worshipped as Chandraghanta, the third Durga, during the *Navaratra* celebration in the *devipaksha* even today.[10]

In the last days of the Pala Dynasty, the eastern part of Bengal was occupied by the Varmana king and Shyamalavarmana became the king of Bengal. He brought five Brahmins, expert in Vedic rituals, from Kashi to Bengal with a view to performing rituals strictly according to Vedic scriptures. These Brahmins and their successors became known in Bengal as the *Pashchatya Vaidika*.[11]

In the ninth century, Kashi was ruled by the Gahadavala dynasty. It is known from an inscription that Kumaradevi, queen to Govindachandra, the famous king of the Gahadavala Dynasty of Kashi, was the daughter of Devarakshita, a chieftain under Ramapala, the Pala emperor.[12] This presumably effected a good rapport between Varanasi and Bengal. Lakshmana Sena, the last independent Hindu king of Bengal, ruling in the last quarter of twelfth century, claimed to have conquered Kalinga, Kamarupa, as well as Varanasi.[13] According to one view, Lakshmana Sena constructed the Panchakroshi Road of Varanasi.[14]

Raja Pratapaditya, the zamindar of Jessore in East Bengal and one of the *barobhuinyas*, or twelve great landlords of Bengal, stayed at Kashi while going to Agra in the last quarter of the sixteenth century for transacting business with the Mughal emperor. He constructed the

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Chaushatti Ghat and Chaushatti Yogini Temple here.[15] Much later he passed away in Kashi in 1614 while being carried to Agra as a royal captive by Raja Man Singh, the Mughal general.[16]

GENESIS OF BENGALEE SETTLEMENT IN VARANASI

The visit of the famous sixteenth century saint of Bengal, Shri Chaitanya, along with his disciples on a pilgrimage, intensified the process of Bengalee settlement in Varanasi.[17] Shri Chaitanya arrived in the City around 1515 and lived in the Matsyodari area.[18] The banyan tree under which he was believed to have taken rest was later called *Chaitanyabat*.[19] He lived here for about two months and cast his spiritual spell on Kashi. During this time, Dandi Swami Prakashananda Saraswati, the illustrious Bengalee monk of Kashi and follower of the Non-dualistic School of Vedanta, became a disciple of Shri Chaitanya and afterwards wrote a book on him entitled *Chaitanya Chandramrita*. Madhusudan Saraswati, another great Bengalee ascetic and also a great scholar of Vedanta, lived in Varanasi during this time, but it is not known whether any meeting took place between Shri Chaitanya and him. Advaitacharya, Nityananda, Rupa Goswami, Sanatana Goswami and Jiva Goswami, who were close associates and followers of Shri Chaitanya and well known Vaishnavas of Bengal, stayed in Kashi on their way to Vrindavan.

Following in their footsteps, Bengalee Vaishnavas, both householders and ascetics, also visited Kashi in addition to Vrindavan and Mathura.[20] These developments presumably paved the way for large Bengalee settlements in Kashi and Vrindavan by people of divergent backgrounds. It was observed later that, generally, the Vaishnavas of Bengal preferred to live in Vrindavan, Mathura and Puri, while Bengalee *Shaivas*, *Shaktas* and Vedantins preferred to settle in Kashi. It should, however, be remembered that Kashi, being a meeting place of all sects of Hinduism, was inhabited by Bengalees of almost every sect.

Among the most illustrious of Bengalee visitors to the City in the eighteenth century was Rani Bhavani, a renowned woman zamindar of North Bengal, who came here in 1753.[21] Rani Bhavani, a pious lady, was gifted with many qualities and was universally loved and respected for the love and sympathy she showed her subjects, as well as for undertaking munificent works, not only in Bengal, but also in various pilgrim centres of North India, especially in Gaya and Varanasi. She was born to Atmaram Chaudhuri and Kasturi Devi and was married to Raja Ramkanta Roy, the

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zamindar of Natore in the Rajsahi District of North Bengal. Within a few years after the passing away of Ramkanta in 1748,[22] Rani Bhavani came to Varanasi on pilgrimage with a large party, stayed here over a long period and constructed and renovated various temples. Rani Satyavati, aunt of Rani Bhavani and wife of Raja Raghunath Roy of Baharband in Bengal, also came to the City and passed her last days here.[23]

Following the example of Rani Bhavani, many other distinguished Bengalees started visiting the City, especially when law and order was improved and travelling became safer. The introduction of railways multiplied the number of Bengalee settlers and pilgrims in the City further.

In this connection, let us quote from an 1860 account left by a Bengalee traveller.[24]

> 'In the present day (1860s) ... the number of (Bengalee) pilgrims to sacred places and shrines had largely increased, as all the wealthier classes, and especially the females, avail themselves very considerably of the safe and speedy mode of travelling by the Rail as an easy means for going on pilgrimage to Benares and Brindaban....
>
> Thirty years ago the strongest possible prejudice against travelling existed in the minds of the Bengalees and to this day (1860) there are many families who have never been able to overcome this aversion. An old Bengali proverb was universally accepted, that he was the happiest of all men who never owned a debt, nor undertook a journey. It was only the old men and old widows who lost their hearth and home that used to go on pilgrimage to Benares and Brindaban; Benares being the sacred City to the worshippers of Shiva and Brindaban the sacred shrine to the worshippers of Vishnu in his incarnation as Krishna. These ancient pilgrims never set out on their journey without first drawing up their will as returning back home was scarcely expected by their favourites.'

BENGAL-VARANASI COMMUNICATIONS

Formerly, communications between Bengal and Varanasi were by both land and river. But as an overland journey was both risky and hazardous, especially in the eighteenth century, pilgrims used to form large parties and visit holy places by boat.[25] Here are few instances of such boat journeys from Bengal to Varanasi around our period.

Krishna Chandra Ghoshal of Calcutta came to Kashi with a big party in 1769 by boat.[26] Again in 1822, Dewan Vijaya Govinda Singha of Murshidabad, nephew of Dewan Ganga Govinda Singha, came to the City along with 700 to 800 people, including his preceptor, priests and others, in 28 different kinds of boats.

As recorded in Chapter III, a road called Benares Road was

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constructed in 1824 from Salkia in Howrah (situated opposite Calcutta on the western bank of the Ganga) to Varanasi[27] to facilitate mainly the speedy and smooth movement of the *dawk* (posts), and also of military traffic, between Calcutta, the British Indian capital, and the eastern and northern parts of the British Indian empire.[28]

Henceforth, this road was presumably used by many Bengalee pilgrims going to Kashi. However, only rich people could avail themselves of the system set up for travelling along with the dawk, carried by horses and carriages, which was expensive. Nevertheless, the dawk journey was more secure and required much less time.

River traffic continued right along with road travel and there are many references in Bengalee newspapers of boat journeys from Bengal to Kashi by rich people accompanied by large parties, even long after the construction of Benares Road.

BENGALEES EXEMPTED FROM PILGRIM TAX

Bengalee pilgrims had to pay a pilgrim tax of 9 pice each for visiting Varanasi, while pilgrims from Nepal had to pay 7 pice on the occasion of passing through the *zamindary* of the Raja of Varanasi.[29] In 1787, one Bengalee, Bhagaban Das Baul, appealed to the English Resident of Benares for an exemption of the pilgrim tax levied upon him. In response to this appeal, Jonathan Duncan, then Resident, ordered his sub-ordinate officers to direct the Raja to exempt the petitioner, his friends and also all Bengalee pilgrims, barring traders or merchants, from the payment of any tax merely for passing through the zamindary of the Raja.

BENGALEE SETTLEMENT NEAR THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In addition to the constant flow of Bengalee pilgrims, there were temporary and permanent Bengalee settlers living in the City. That Bengalees formed a sizeable community in the City as early as in 1788, is evident from an Address by the Bengalee pandits dated April 27, 1788, which was prepared and sent on the occasion of the impeachment of Warren Hastings by the British Parliament.[30] Though it has been mentioned in the Government record that the signatories were all Bengalee pandits, actually this was not so. For example, Jayanarayan Ghoshal of this list was originally an aristocrat and not a pandit.[31] This is rather a list of prominent Bengalees of Varanasi including pandits. The Address suggests

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that the Bengalees, like other communities of the City, also welcomed the new administration of the City. The address is presented as follows :

> 'We are satisfied with the conduct and friendship of Mr. (Warren) Hastings. During his residence in this country he always interested himself in our welfare and in the protection of our reputation and credit. As from the effects of Mr. Hastings' kindness we reside in the City of Benares with comfort and ease, and the promoters of disturbances are severely punished. Many people come from all quarters to reside here in consequence of knowing of this happiness. He had appointed the Nawab Ally Ibrahim Cawn from a conviction of his understanding, prudence, fear of God, and disinterestedness, to protect the good and to punish the bad men and to adjudge the causes between Mahomedans according to the Koran, and between Hindoos according to the Shastra. And Ally Ibrahim Cawn possessed these virtues and acts comfortable to their precepts, and in consequence thereof our protection and safety is greater than during the Government of former Rajahs.
>
> When Mr. Hastings came to Benares, every person who went to him was received with attention and respect, according to his rank and in order to please God Bisweswar and to secure eternal protection, he established the *Nubut* (Concert room) at his own great expense on the door of the temple of Bisweswar. During the time of his residence, in these provinces he cherished us as his children. He did not in the least instance occasion any injury towards us. On these accounts we have always lived in peace, and the king of England who is our protector and the guardian of the poor, and the Company have gained great fame and we pray for their prosperity....'[32]

The names of all the signatories to this Address have been given in the Appendix.

ANOTHER LIST OF BENGALEES

Another list of Bengalees of some prominence who resided in the City from around the last quarter of the eighteenth century to the third quarter of the nineteenth century is given below :[33]

Annada Bapuli
Indranarayan Bapuli
Kashinath Panditendra Vidya Bahadur
Kanailal Ghatak
Kedar Gangopadhyay
Kedar (Dampa)
Kali Kaviraj
Gourmohon Mukhopadhyay
Chandicharan Nyayalankar
Chandrakanta Lahiri
Chandicharan Biswas
Thakurdas Nyayapanchanan
Kalikanath Mukhopadhyay
Karunamoy Bhattacharya
Kaliprasad Bandyopadhyay
Kalomohan Chaudhuri
Vireshwar Gangopadhyay
Madanmohan Vachaspati
Mahesh Panchanan
Mrityunjoy Vidyabhushan
Madhusudan Vidyabhushan
Madanmohon Shiromani
Maheshchandra Sarkar
Rajnarayan Tarkasiddhanta

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Tinkadi Mukhopadhyay
Tarini Charan Kaviraj
Devanath Bachaspati
Pyarimohon Kaviraj
Becharam Sarvabhouma
Shrinath Raychaudhuri
Haradhan Vidyabhushan
Shyamacharan Lahiri
Radhanath Kathak
Ramlochan Kathak
Raghubir Tarkapanchanan
Ramnidhi Paladhi
Ramkali Chaudhuri
Ramcharan Mitra
Shambhu Vidyalankar
Shivaram Bhattacharya

Almost nothing is known about these Bengalees barring a few exceptions. For example, Kashinath Pandit was the first rector or principal of the Benares Sanskrit College, Mahesh Chandra Sarkar was a musician, Shyamacharan Lahiri was an ascetic, and Indranarayan Bapuli and Annada Bapuli belonged to one of the oldest aristocratic Bengalee families of the City. These were but a few among the large number of Bangalee residents of Varanasi, which increased further in course of time.

As already mentioned, the Bengalee settlers did not confine themselves within the Bangali Tola quarter, but lived in other parts of the City too. The Mitra family, a well-known aristocratic Bengalee family, lived in Chowkhamba. Again, the Bengalee zamindars owned vast tracts of landed property in different quarters of the City. Rani Bhavani owned a wide area from Kalitala (near Dashashwamedh) to Sonarpura; Jayanarayan Ghoshal owned a big plot of land in Bhelupura; the zamindars of Muktagachha had their properties near Asi area; Girish Chandra De, the Dewan of the Raja of Varanasi, had his property near Tilbhandeshwar; the zamindar of Narail of Jessore owned property in Madanpura and the zamindar of Kashimbazar had his property in Luxa. Besides these many big and petty zamindars and moneyed persons of Bengal also had dwelling houses in different parts of Varanasi.[34]

A European author remarked sarcastically that the Bengalee *babus* would visit Kashi for washing away sins committed while serving under the British, as well as those committed in their private lives.[35] Moreover, it became fashionable for rich zamindars, businessmen and a newly emerged middle class of Bengal to set up residence at Kashi to pass some days or even their last days in this City of Liberation. In fact, there was a genuine spiritual motive behind such visits and settlements, and there were secular motives too. Examples of this variety of motivation by the Bengalees, especially their elite will be explicit from the following instances of visits and stays in Kashi.

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VISITS OF ELITE BENGALEES TO KASHI

Krishnachandra Ghoshal, a resident of Khidirpore, Calcutta, and the elder brother of Gokulchandra Ghoshal, the Dewan of Henry Vansittart, Governor of the English settlement in Bengal, came to Kashi with a large body of people by boat in 1769. Presumably, the purpose behind this visit was not only pilgrimage, but also to get introduced to various classes of people of different places, to collect information about the condition of the people and to get their reactions to the British administration. Such information was perhaps needed by Gokulchandra, the Dewan, who was required to supply such information to his master, Vansittart.

Among the people accompanying Krishnachandra on this pilgrimage was one Vijayram Sen, a *vaidya*, or physician who left an account of this pilgrimage in verse in Bengali under the title of *Teerthamangal*.[36]*

Krishnakanta Nandi (Kanta Babu), the founder of the Kashimbazar estate of Bengal, had accompanied Warren Hastings in 1781 to Kashi during the British occupation of the City, when the former protected the queens of the Kashi Raj from manhandling by Hastings' sepoys. As a mark of their gratefulness, the queens presented Kanta Babu with the deities of Lakshminarayana, Sita, etc., and many ornaments, some of which are still preserved in Kashimbazar Palace.[37]

Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal had gone to Kashi mainly for the recovery of his health. Rammohan Roy, considered the 'Prophet of new India', was obliged to reside for ten or twelve years in Varanasi at a distance from his friends and relatives. He probably fixed his residence here on account of the facilities afforded by this sacred City for the study of Sanskrit. In any case, he seems to have remained here until his father's death in 1803,[38] writes William Adam, a friend of Rammohan's.

Prince Dwarakanath Tagore, father of Devendranath and grandfather of Rabindranath, and also a prominent figure of his time, had his *kothi*, or trade house, in Varanasi.[39] Devendranath, who became the leader of the Brahmo Samaj, came to Kashi in 1847 to inquire personally about the culture of the Vedas there and also deputed four members of the Brahmo Samaj to this City to get a Vedic education.[40]

Ramgati Sen, son of Ramprasad Sen, the great ascetic poet of Bengal, came to Varanasi at the age of fifty for the practice of yoga. He lived here for forty years and passed away at the ripe old age of ninety, when his

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* More about Vijayram's account has been given in Chapter XXI.

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body was cremated at the Manikarnika burning ghat and his widow became a *sati*.[41]

Kebalram Bhattacharya, the Court Pandit of the zamindar of Natore of Bengal, reached the City in 1789 along with his youngest son, Jayagopal Tarkalankar, where he breathed his last in 1803. Jayagopal was educated in different branches of Sanskrit and was especially proficient in *Alamkara* and literature and earned great repute as a *Shabdik*, or linguist. Jayagopal left the City in 1803 after the passing away of his father and in his later life he was appointed Pandit of the Supreme Court in Calcutta.[42]

Jnanendra Mohan Das, in his *Banger Bahire Bangalee* (Bengalees Outside Bengal), recorded that Pandit Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, the famous educationist and humanist of nineteenth century Bengal, had once gone to Kashi to learn Hindi so as to examine the Hindi answer scripts written by the British civilians studying at Fort William College, Calcutta.[43] Vidyasagar also visited the City to visit his parents who had retired there.[44] Pandit Mrityunjoy Vidyalankar, one of the reputed teachers of Fort William College, Mahamahopadhyay Raghumani Vidyabhushan, a great scholar of Sanskrit, and Pandit Taranath Vachaspati, the author of *Vachaspatyam*, the famous Sanskrit lexicon, also visited Kashi in the nineteenth century.[45]

Dayaram Biswas, the Dewan of the Nimakmahal at Noakhali, Bengal, and a very rich man, settled in the City in his last days and passed away there in 1804. His desire to be cremated in Brahmanal near Manikarnika was said to have been objected to by the local Brahmins and sannyasins, as that place had been reserved for the cremation of Brahmins and sannyasins only. Finally, with the mediation of the Raja of Varanasi and the British Collector, the body of the deceased was cremated in Brahmanal.[46]

Hari Ghosh of Calcutta, the Dewan of the Monghyr Fort and who was famous for his proverbial munificence and support of numerous dependants, sold his property and settled in the City along with his eldest son Kashinath.[47] Hari Ghosh passed away here in 1806 and Kashinath, who had no issue, also passed away in the City.[48]

Ramdulal Sarkar, a rich man of Calcutta, had gone to Kashi and consecrated a Shiva temple there. Bishwanath Motilal (1779-1844), another rich man of Calcutta and a liberal donor, also came to Kashi and lived here.[49]

Jadunath Sarvadhikari went to the City around 1854[50] and resided there with the family of one Shyamacharan Bandyopadhyay, originally a resident of Salkia in Howrah, who had passed away in Varanasi through *prayopaveshana*.[51] When a cholera epidemic broke out in Bengali Tola

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and many people fell victim to it, Jadunath left the City for other pilgrim centres. He revisited in 1856 and stayed here for some months, witnessing the outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857.[52] Jadunath wrote an interesting account of his travel in Bengali entitled *Teerthabhraman*.

Bholanauth Chunder, a Bengalee intellectual of the mid nineteenth century, visited the City in the 1860s and wrote a detailed account of the City under the pen name of *a Hindoo*.

These two above mentioned books furnish important pieces of information on the socio-cultural history of contemporary Varanasi.

The Philanthropist, a newspaper published in Calcutta, recorded on October 20, 1832, that Babu Dakshinananda Mukhopadhyay, a former student of the Hindu College, a 'young Bengal' and also the editor of the *Jnaneshwar*, a Bengali magazine, went to the City with the sole purpose of merrymaking. There he was reported to have fallen victim to some ruffians who administered narcotics to him, as a result of which he became seriously ill.[53]

These brief descriptions illustrate the many different objectives some Bengalees had for visiting Varanasi. Nevertheless, for most part, it may be said that the main objective was religious in nature.

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY BENGALEE ARISTOCRATS OF KASHI

A list of prominent Bengalees of Kashi of 1822, along with scanty data about some of them, has been found in the Government records and is furnished below.[54]

Raja Kalishankar Ghoshal, son of Jayanarayan Ghoshal, topped this list. Following Kalishankar Ghoshal is Madanmohan Mukherjee, but nothing more is mentioned about him. Rasiklal Datta, the son of Madan Datta, a famous rich man of the Hatkhola area of Calcutta, used to live near Chaushatti Yogini Ghat in his old age.[55] Balaram Sarkar came to the City and lived in Madanpura after retirement from his position as the Dewan of Patna.[56] Jagatchandra Pandit had owned a *jageer* in the south of the City and two houses in Devnathpura by way of succession.[57] Pitambar Mitra, formerly the Dewan of the Collector of Bhagalpur, was brought to Kashi by Sir Frederick Hamilton to work as his *serishtadar*, in which post he served till 1818.[58] The name of Rajendra Mitra of the famous Mitra family of Chowkhamba was also found in the list[59] and detailed information about him will be furnished below.[60]

The list also includes Kalishankar Ray from Jessore of Bengal who

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had served as the Dewan of Raja Ramakrishna, son of Rani Bhavani of Natore, who came to Varanasi after retirement.[61] Kalishankar was also a liberal donor and spent lavishly on benevolent causes. He constructed the *natmandir* in front of the Durga Temple in Durga Kund for which he had spent a sum of Rs. 24,000 in 1823-24.[62] Kalishankar also donated Rs. 100 for the Benares Sanskrit College.[63]

RELIGIOUS SERVICES OF BENGALEES

Discovery of Lost Tirthas

As mentioned in Chapter VI, Pandit Ramchandra Vidyalankar and his son, Umashankar Tarkalankar, examined almost every nook and corner of Kashi, went through old books and manuscripts, and finally, discovered many lost *tirthas* of this ancient, sacred City. They, thus became instrumental in restoring the glory of numerous idols in the holy sites of Kashi.[64] Moreover, the *Kashi Yatra Paddhati*, a treatise written by Ramchandra and his son, also bears fine testimony to their singular achievements in reconstructing the religious history of the City, as well as in reviving the Puranic Hindu religion in Varanasi. Almost a hundred years after their achievement, a Gujarati scholar named Gorji also played an important role in the further discovery of the lost *tirthas* of Kasi.[65]

Building of Temples and Installation of Deities

Along with the Marathas, it is evident that Bengalees had also been constructing temples and installing idols in Kashi in an appreciable number, since both groups were required to pay a duty of Rs. 1, Annas 4, upon 'placing the figure of symbol of any Hindoo Divinity' in a new temple.[66] This is further corroborated by many references to such ventures published in contemporary Bengali newspapers and journals.

Rani Bhavani—The Annapurna of Kashi

We have already referred to Rani Bhavani's visit to the City in around 1753. She spent liberally on the construction and renovation of temples and installation of deities, the opening and running *satras*, the building of houses for Brahmins, the digging of big *kundas*, or ponds, and in undertaking numerous other religious and charitable works, including some construction of the road between Bengal and Varanasi. She was so renowned for her charity and piety and was so much loved and respected by the local people of Varanasi[67] that she was popularly called the 'Annapurna of Kashi'. Available details regarding her religious works in the City are given below.[68]

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A building complex was constructed by her in 1770 in Bengali Tola for the installation of deities and also as a residence for her own family. This building complex popularly known as 'Jai Bhavani Baḍi', mainly consisted of five temples. The deities installed there were Durga, Vishalakshi and Jai Bhavani, located in the northern side of the complex, Gopala and Radha-Govinda, installed in the centre of the complex beyond a gate with a *nahabat-khana*, and Kali, also a deity of Tara in full seclusion.

According to an inscription here, while the deity of Gopala was installed by Rani Bhavani herself, the deity of Govinda was installed by Tara, her daughter. The deity of the goddess Tara was installed by Chandrakanta Thakur and Nilmani Thakur, who had helped Rani Bhavani to a great extent in undertaking munificent works in Kashi. This Nilmani Thakur was probably identical with one Nilmani Thakur, one of the signatories to the aforementioned certification of Warren Hastings. Jayanarayan Ghoshal leaves an interesting account of these temples in his monograph on Varanasi.[69]

From the records, it appears that the Rani maintained a separate garden for each deity installed by her for the supply of fruit and flowers for worship. All the gardens at present have made room for building sites, except one which has been reported to be the site of the present Jayanarayan Intermediate College.

Rani Bhavani also renovated the entire Panch Kroshi tract, famous for pilgrimage, built *dharmashalas*, renovated temples and *kundas* at every five miles of this long tract, namely at Asi Sangam (Pushkar Tirtha), Kandhawa (Kardameshwar), Bhimachandi, Rameshwar and Kapildhara. Among other works, she consecrated the Bhavanishwara Temple in 1753 with a suitable inscription[70] and also constructed the famous Durgavati Temple at Durga Kunda,[71] which was mentioned by Jayanarayan in his account of Varanasi with the observation that the temple was without any *natmandir* in front of it.[72]

The Rani also paved the Kapal Mochana Kunda, Omkareshwara Kunda and Kurukheshtra Kunda and constructed the Omkareshwara Temple. One of the purposes behind all her charitable works was a desire to revive and renovate the sacred objects of Kashi, which had long been neglected and mutilated and would have disappeared altogether unless taken care of immediately.

There is hearsay, believed to be true by many in Varanasi, that Rani

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Bhavani constructed 365 houses there, installed the deity of Shiva in each of those houses and wished to make a gift of them to the local Brahmins.[73] But the Bengalee and U. P. Brahmins refused to accept the said *dana*, or gift, because the acceptance of any gift by a true Brahmin in a place of pilgrimage, especially Kashi, was not held proper. Consequently, South Indian and Maratha Brahmins accepted these houses. The existence of a row of houses located near Mir Ghat and a lane there known as Rani Bhavani Gali, lend support to this view.

From an inscription, it has been further revealed that the renovation of Kardameshwara Temple and the Kunda, undertaken in 1802, was perhaps Rani Bhavani's last public work in the City,[74] as it was in the same year that she passed away at Baḍanagar, near Murshidabad in Bengal, at the age of seventy-nine.[75]

The Rani Bhavani Trust

The Rani left an endowment fund of Rupees one and a half lakh to defray the expenditure of her religious establishments in Varanasi, and during her last days she created an *arpannama*, or trust, making Pandit Kashi Shankar Thakur, her guru, the sole trustee and manager of all her Varanasi estates in 1793.[76] But collaterals in the Rani's Natore State in Bengal filed suit in local court for the cancellation of the said arpannama. When the local court upheld the arpannama in favour of Kashi Shankar, the matter was referred to the Calcutta High Court. The High Court finally decided the case in favour of the Pandit as well in 1815.[77]

The Pandit managed the estate and after passing away, his widow, Bhagirathi Devi, succeeded him as the manager of the estate. Mismanagement of the estate is reported to have started from this period and Bhagirathi Devi and her son are said to have mortgaged the whole estate to the local Chaitanya Math on January 18, 1832.[78] At the time one Deviprasad, calling himself Khair Khan Sarkar, meaning faithful citizen, informed the district authorities about said mismanagement and upon his petition the Government took over the management of the estate as a 'mismanaged estate' under the provisions of the Revenue Manual.[79]

The estate was then put under the management of the 'Local Agency' where it remained until 1863. But even during this period, Rani Bhavani's establishments in Varanasi are alleged to have suffered further damage when the gardens were leased out and a major portion of the *devottara* land of the estate was entered as 'nazul' in the survey settlement of 1852.

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After the enactment of the Religious Endowment Act of 1863, the Government handed over the management of this estate to three nominated trustees, the succession of which was governed by provisions of said Act.[80]

Munificence of Other Bengalee Zamindars

Following the footsteps of Rani Bhavani, many Bengalee landlords spent huge sums for charitable work in Kashi and built and renovated temples, *kundas* and ghats, installed idols of Shiva, opened *satras*, patronized Sanskrit academies and scholars, and thus, earned repute for themselves, as well as for Bengalees of the City as a whole.

Here are typical examples that illustrate how rich and religious minded Bengalees, who generally made pilgrimages to Kashi for short periods, spent lavishly to earn religious merit there.[81]

Vimala Devi, a rich woman zamindar of Mymensing District of Bengal, came to Kashi in 1822 and installed twelve *Shivalingas*. She fed six thousand Brahmins and one thousand Brahmin widows and gave Rupees four and one *lui* (winter cloth) to each. She also fed one hundred maidens and gave each of them in kind worth Rupees ten. Uninvited Brahmins were given one Rupee each and beggars also eight annas each. The scholars who were engaged for religious rites were given *pattavastra*, *shal-doshala*, and sums ranging from three to four hundred Rupees each.[82]

Krishna Chandra Roy, the zamindar of Nadia, visited the City and installed an idol of Shiva.[83] Shavashiva Kali was also installed by the zamindar of Nadia in Deonathpura.[84] Dewan Krishna Basu, who was born to Dayaram Basu of Taḍagram in Hooghly of Bengal in 1733, visited Kashi and installed a Shiva.[85]

Harendranarayan, the seventeenth Maharaja of Coochbehar (1783-1839), came to Kashi in 1833 to pass his last days, when he undertook the construction of the small, but beautiful Coochbehar Karunamayee Kalibaḍi Temple of Varanasi. At his sudden demise, his son, Shivendranarayan, completed the unfinished work. The opening ceremony of the temple was held and a *satra* was also established near the temple on the auspicious day of *akshaya tritiya* of 1253 BS. Hearsay goes that Lakshminarayan, the fourth Maharaja of Coochbehar (1587-1621), discovered the Lolarka Kunda, the legendary solar seat of Kashi, in the Bhadaini area, a dip into which, according to the *Kashi Khandam*, would cure one of leprosy. Later, Shivendranarayan, already referred to,

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renovated the Lolarka Kunda in 1843, which was commemorated by a stone-slab with a suitable inscription.[86] The expenses incurred for the regular worship of Lolarkeshwara Shiva, installed near the Lolarka Kunda, were being borne by Coochbehar State.[87]

Rani Bhuvanmayee of Puntia, Bengal, also earned a good name in the City when she undertook various pious and charitable works there in the early part of the nineteenth century.[88] She renovated the Dashashwamedh and Prayag ghats with stone, constructed the Brahmapuri Temple on Dashashwamedh Ghat and installed the idol of Dulareshwara Shiva. She started a large *satra* where many Bengalees were fed regularly. Rani Bhuvanmayee also owned a very big garden near Durga Kunda which was popularly called the Puntia's *Bagan*, or the garden of the zamindars of Puntia.

Raja Rajballabh, another rich man of Calcutta, is said to have reformed the famous burning ghat of Manikarnika.[89] Ramhari Biswas who belonged to the renowned Biswas family of Khaḍdaha near Calcutta, served as the Dewan of Nimakmahal of Chittagong and was a multi-millionaire. After retirement from service, he visited many pilgrim centres including Kashi, where he also constructed some Shiva temples.[90] Ramjoy Mukhopadhyay, of the reputed Mukhopadhyay family of Janai, also constructed a Shiva temple.[91]

THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL BENGALEE FAMILIES

The aforementioned Bengalees, as we have already noted, either visited the City temporarily or passed their last days here prompted mainly by religious considerations. But there were also certain short- and long-standing Bengalee families of Varanasi who contributed substantially, not only to religious institutions and projects, but also to education, health, etc. The role and contributions of such families are furnished below.

The Mitra Family

The Mitra family living at the Chowkhamba area of the City was well known all over Varanasi. Govindaram Mitra, the founder of this family, lived in Calcutta and worked under J. Z. Holwell as the *Naib Zamindar*, or Deputy Collector.[92] He was called the 'Black Zamindar' and was a powerful man among the local people.[93] He assisted the British administration in Calcutta in various ways, especially in maintaining law and order.[94] He earned considerable riches and became a man of great opulence. According to one view, though not universally accepted,

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Govindapur, one of the component villages of Calcutta, was named after Govindaram.[95] Govindaram used to live there, but when the British acquired the area for constructing a fort, Govindaram had to move his family to the Kumartuli area.[96] Anandaram Mitra, the successor to Govindaram and a man 'honoured with the notice of Warren Hastings and Lord Cornwallis', had also earned great wealth through his service under Thomas Brook in the Collectorate of Natore, Rajsahi.[97] He left Calcutta for Varanasi allegedly due to family troubles[98] around the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and settled in Chowkhamba area of the City in his last days.[99]

Raja Rajendralal Mitra

Raja Rajendralal Mitra, son of Anandaram Mitra, was a liberal donor and a distinguished man of Varanasi.[100] He was granted the title of 'Raja' by the British Government in recognition of his munificence. Appointed one of the members of the Benares Local Committee of Public Instruction,[101] he made a handsome donation to the Benares College Museum and also towards the building fund for a school house at Varanasi, the latter having been accepted with a letter of thanks, dated September 3, 1836, from George Nicholls, the secretary of said Committee. He also donated land for the construction of the Grand Trunk Road which passed through his *zamindary* in Varanasi. The following excerpts from a letter by E. A. Reade, Commissioner, Fifth Division, to J. Thornton, Secretary to Government, North Western Province, dated December 5, 1849,[102] refer to this donation and to the Government's appreciation of it :

> 'Part of the Grand Trunk Road from Rajghat, Benares, runs through the estate Mukdoompur Pargunnah, Dehat Amanut, of which the Baboo Rajendrelal Mitra is the rent-free holder and proprietor.
>
> About 1820 the present line of road was taken and on that occasion eight and a half *beegahs* (of land) were given up without claim of compensation.
>
> In giving effect to the recent orders of Government, for enlarging and fixing the limits of the Grand Trunk Road a further appropriation of nearly 8 beegahs has been made.
>
> The Baboo declines receiving any compensation and tenders the land for the acceptance of the Government and the public good.
>
> This act of public spirit is the more to be commended because it is the suggestion of his own mind, and I am free to confess, with reference to the great value set on land in the vicinity of Benares, I was not prepared for such an act of liberality.'

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From this letter, we also come to know that Rajendralal Mitra was a member of the Road Fund and that he had also made a lump sum donation to the construction of an entrance gate to Benares College.[103]

In recognition of Rajendralal's acts of munificence, it was decided that a *khelat* would be bestowed on him by the Government.[104] He was also appointed to the committee formed in aid of the Patriotic Fund created in Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Mirzapur, and Ghazipur to send help to Britain during the Crimean War (1853-1856).[105]

The long-standing and close relations between the Mitras and the British, as well as their receiving favours from the latter, were mentioned in a letter by Reade, the Commissioner, dated December 5, 1849, wherein he remarks, 'By the present and similar acts of munificence he (Rajendralal) has shown himself to be the worthy descendant of a family which for more than a century has at different times received marks of favour from the British Government'.[106] The following incidents illustrate how the Mitras were shown special favour by the Government :

According to Clause 2, Section 9, Regulation II of 1806, 'All persons whether European or Native within the Company's provinces, excepting such privileged persons as the Government might especially exempt from the operation of the rule contained in this section, are positively forbidden to dress any other servants either for the purpose of parade or business in the uniform of Company's Sepoys and *Luscars*, or dress so nearly approaching to that uniform as to enable the persons wearing it to impose themselves on the country people for Sepoys or Luscars'.[107] Accordingly, G. Wyatt, Deputy Magistrate of Benares, prohibited the use of such uniform worn by the Sepoys in the service of Rajendralal.

Rajendralal petitioned the Governor General's Agent at Benares to exempt him from this prohibition. Finally, Major McGregor, Agent to the Lieut. Governor of North Provinces, intervened in this matter in favour of Rajendralal and wrote back to G. Wyatt on 11 March, 1848 :

> 'I learn from Baboo Rajendra Mitra's petition and from other sources that he and his ancestors have invariably, for a period of upward 70 years, been allowed to cloth their Sepoys in uniform such as is now worn by some of them, two of whom attended at my house to-day for the purpose of being inspected by me. The uniform in question is not very dissimilar from that worn by Sepoys in the Company's service. Certainly, it might be mistaken for the same by country people, but as it has been sanctioned for such a lengthened period, it would appear that the Government contemplated the exemption of Baboo Rajendra's family from the operations of the prohibitory rule. I am told that he is a most respectable man and unless any of his

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Sepoys who amount I believe, altogether to eight or ten only, has been lately abusing a privilege which has been for so long a period recognized by our authorities doubtless without any evil consequences, I should feel obliged by your not interfering with it but should you deem that it is not in your power to comply with this request I submit the case for consideration and orders of the Honourable the Lieutt. Governor.'[108]

Baboo Gurudas Mitra

Rajendralal's expenditures were greater than his income, resulting in the insolvency of the family after his passing away on January 26, 1856.[109] His son, Gurudas Mitra, who was a leading banker of the City, restored the financial position of the family, though at the same time his doors remained open to the poor and indigent. It was during his time that some articles were sent for the Paris Exhibition from Varanasi at the insistence of the British Government and these items, it was reported, got due appreciation from the visitors to the Exhibition. The initiative taken by Gurudas Mitra in manufacturing these items and sending them to the Exhibition is worth mentioning.[110] He also contributed Rs. 3,600 to the General Hospital set up in the City.[111]

Baradadas Mitra, another son of Rajendralal Mitra, also donated Rs. 6,000 for constructing a well to provide pure drinking water to the inmates of the Leper and Blind Asylum of the City. Both Gurudas Mitra and Baradadas Mitra helped the British during the Sepoy Mutiny, for which they received formal recognition and were conferred with special honours by the British.[112] Pramadadas Mitra, successor of Gurudas and an eminent scholar of Sanskrit, was appointed professor in the Queen's College of Varanasi. He was also known as a saintly and kindhearted person.

Durga and Kali Pujas hosted by the Mitras were famous for their pomp, grandeur and variety of entertainment provided.[113] The Kashi Naresh and some of the local *rais*, and even some Europeans, were invited by the Mitras to their house on such occasions.

The Mitras today have lost their formal pomp and glamour, and the palatial building in which they used to reside now stands desolated and dilapidated in Chowkhamba only to give testimony to their glorious past.

The Ghoshal Family

Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal

Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal of Bhukailash at Khidderpore in Calcutta was a brother of Gokul Chandra Ghoshal, the *Dewan* of Henry Vansittart.

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Once Jayanarayan was suffering from a serious malady, which, according to some, was leprosy, when he came to Varanasi in 1791 with a view to a change of climate for regaining his health. Most probably, he and his family lived near the Panchaganga Ghat. He purchased a large plot of land near Durga Kunda from Kashmiri Mall,[114] the famous banker of the City. Later on, this area came to be known as Gurudham after the famous Gurudhama Temple constructed by him there. Jayanarayan, endowed with the rare qualities of head and heart[115] left an indelible mark on the educational and religious history of the City during our period. Here he developed a deep intimacy with some local Europeans, studied Christian theology and appreciated Christianity like a devout Christian. The Christian doctrine made such a great impact upon him that he declared in his Bengali poem entitled *Karunanidhanavilasa*, that Jesus Christ was the Incarnation of Lord Krishna in the Modern Age of *Kali* (Iron Age).

His close association with Christians was responsible for giving currency to a wrong idea that Jayanarayan had renounced Hinduism and embraced Christianity. Despite this loving appreciation for Christian theology, he continued to live the pure orthodox life of a Hindu Brahmin till his last breath and was cremated at the Manikarnika cremation site.[116]

Jayanarayan's 'Kashi Parikrama', a Rare Account of Kashi

Jayanarayan also showed special interest in the propagation of religious literature. He helped the Kashi Naresh in his monumental project of translating the *Mahabharata* into Hindi. He was also the author of *Shankari Sangeet* and few other Sanskrit works.

Again, it was at his initiative that *Kashi Khandam* of the *Skanda Puranam* was translated from Sanskrit into Bengali. Raja Nrisingha Deva Bahadur of Bansberia in the district of Hooghly in Bengal, who was living in the City at that time, helped him in this literary enterprise. Jayanarayan himself composed a section entitled *Kashi Parikrama*, containing descriptions of Varanasi then,[117] which he incorporated into the translated *Kashi Khandam*. Like *Teerthamangal* by Vijayram, though this work has both historical and literary value, such a pen-picture of Varanasi in rhyme is possibly one without a second in Bengali literature.

Jayanarayan vividly describes the topography of the City in *Kashi Parikrama*,[118] especially its ghats, lanes and buildings. He describes the *ghatiyas* who used to sit on the banks of the Ganga with large umbrellas over their heads and attend to bathers.[119] He further describes the buildings

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of Varanasi[120] and mentions the tall *minars*, called 'Madhav Ray ki Dharara', of the Aurangzib Mosque, formerly Bindumadhava Temple.[121]

There were neither electric nor gas lights in the streets at that time. So the citizens used to place lamps at the thresholds of their houses for the convenience of pedestrians, which must have also illumined their houses at night.[122] The innumerable lanes of Kashi were compared to the nerves of the body by the author.[123]

Jayanarayan also gives a vivid picture of the chanting of the Vedas by the Brahmins of the City[124] and the daily life of the ascetics.[125] He also did not fail to notice that side by side with genuine monks, there were *Gosain* or Sannyasi merchants whose profession was money lending and who lived in palatial buildings and would lead luxurious lives.[126]

The *Bankas*, who were 'prize fighters', were well known for their physical strength as well as their haughtiness. Jayanarayan portrays this aspect of their character in his account.[127] Women in general did not maintain a strict *purdah* system in Varanasi and a pen picture of their daily life forms part of the *Kashi Parikrama.*[128]

Numerous festivals were a special characteristic of the City and Jayanarayan describes in his poem many of those events, such as Durga worship, Shyama worship, *Holi* festival, Budhwamangal or Boat festival.[129]

The above description amply shows that Jayanarayan gave a detailed picture of the social and cultural landscape of the City, including its fairs and festivals, with occasional personal observations. What is most remarkable about his account is that his reverential attitude towards Varanasi did not impede his objectivity. Thus, his monograph has become indispensable to scholars studying Modern Varanasi.[130]

Jayanarayan's Friendship with Raja Nrisingha Deva

Raja Nrisingha Deva Ray, who built a unique temple for the goddess Hamseshwari at Bansberia, was born in 1740 to a *zamindar* family. He was deprived of most of his paternal property when he was merely a child.

He went to Kashi, possibly in 1797, where he stayed on for a considerable time reducing expenditures and earning money with which he sought to recover the whole of his paternal property. In Kashi he was introduced to Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal and soon these two gifted persons became close friends. Nrisingha Deva was a scholar of Sanskrit and Persian and also proficient in painting and music. He composed many

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devotional songs, translated the *Uddisha Tantra* into Bengali and rendered invaluable assistance to Jayanarayan in translating the *Kashi Khandam*. It is believed that he earned seven lakhs Rupees, possibly by business, while residing in Kashi. With this money he returned to his native home in Bengal and constructed the symbolic temple of Hamseshwari. It is quite likely that Nrisingha Deva and Jayanarayan Ghoshal had a discussion in Kashi on the idea of a symbolic temple, as both undertook the construction of such temples.[131]

Jayanarayan passed away in Kashi in 1822 at the age of 69 and was cremated at Manikarnika Ghat.[132] His life and works in Varanasi are spectacular in many respects and there is no doubt that he occupies a unique position, not only among local Bengalees, but among the whole of the Indian population of the City in his period.

Raja Kalishankar Ghoshal

It has been already noted that Raja Kalishankar Ghoshal, son of Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal, topped the official list[133] of leading Bengalees of Kashi in 1822. Following the footsteps of his great father, he also spent lavishly for benevolent works and continued patronizing the Jaynarayan School founded by his father. He also set up a Blind Asylum in 1826 to ameliorate the poor conditions of the blind of the City.[134]

Kalishankar moved an *arzee* to the Government through the Committee of Public Instruction on January 1, 1825, seeking a formal recognition of his munificence by the Government in the form of a title to be conferred, not on him, but on his sons.[135]

The Government actively considered Kalishankar's wish and finally sent the following instruction to W. A. Brooke, the Agent to the Governor-General in Benares, on March 11, 1825, for conferring the title of *Rajah* and *Bahadoor* on Kalishankar himself, but not on any other member of his family :

> 'You are requested, on the first convenient occasion to invest Kalishankar Ghoshal with a *khelat* and a fringed Palankeen in the most public and formal manner, and you will at the same time deliver the enclosed letter from the Right Honourable Governor-General announcing the titles which have been conferred on him by the British Government.'[136]

Kalishankar maintained good relations with the Government and even entrusted the Government with the task of executing his will after his death.[137] He wanted to vouchsafe that his sons should not 'act like sons of those Babus of Calcutta, who squandering away their fortunes have

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brought the names of their fathers in the distress, but on the contrary, may pass their lives with credit and reputation in the service of the British Government'.[138] Satyashankar Ghoshal, one of his sons, also maintained the tradition of public spirit and charity by donating liberally for public works in the name of the Ghoshal family.

The Bapuli Family

Like the Mitras and the Ghoshals, there was another old, rich and aristocratic Bengalee family in Varanasi, well known as the Bapulis, but unfortunately, their authenticated histories are not available. It is known, however, that Indranarayan, the founder of this family in Varanasi, had settled here in around 1864 after retirement and lived with his family near Kedar Ghat.[139]

Kalinath Bapuli, either a son or grandson of Indranarayan, owned a large property and was one of the celebrated Bengalees of the City during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century.[140] In the December 14, 1851 issue of the *Kashivartaprakashika*, Kalinath was noted as 'Raja Babu' who was closely associated with this magazine and to whose house the press of the magazine was moved later on.[141]

In the absence of any other reliable information about the family, this piece of information about Kalinath is very important for various reasons. First, Kalinath was possibly given the title of Raja either by the Government or by the people, so he must have been a man of opulence and public spirit; as a man lacking such qualifications would not have been called Raja*. His connections with the publication of a magazine like *Kashivartaprakashika* also show his public spirit and interest in learning. Secondly, it also confirms the fact, previously surmised, that it was at the time of his residence at Kedar Ghat that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa stayed with his patron Mathuramohan Biswas for some days during their pilgrimage to Kashi in 1868.[142] Thus, Kalinath and his family enjoyed the rarest good fortune of being blessed with the divine presence of Sri Ramakrishna in their residence.

The Dey Family

The Dey family was another old aristocratic Bengalee family of Kashi. The father of Girish Chandra Dey, the Dewan of Kashi Naresh, first settled in Varanasi where the family had a *zamindary* and houses at both

* 'Raja' might have been just Kalinath's petname as well as petnames are quite common among Bengalees.

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Madanpura and Pandey Haoli. Mahesh Chandra Sarkar, the celebrated Veena maestro of nineteenth century Varanasi, belonged to this family.

Mahesh Chandra's father, Ramchandra Sarkar, was himself a Sitar player and having observed the child's inattentiveness to studies, started training him in that instrument. Though Mahesh Chandra acquired proficiency in playing the Sitar in a short time, he became illustrious as a *Veena* player. During a visit to Varanasi in 1868, Sri Ramakrishna went into ecstasy while enjoying a performance of the *raga Kanaḍa* on the Veena played by Mahesh Chandra.[143]

Ganesh Chandra Vajpeyee, a famous musician, who was appointed Mahesh Chandra's teacher, trained him first in the Sitar then in Veena, but. Mahesh Chandra preferred the Veena. The name of his other music teachers were Sadiq Ali and Vande Ali. Mahesh Chandra practised very hard and spent a fabulous amount in procuring the best pieces of wood and bamboo from China, Singapore and, even, Japan to be able to make high quality Veenas. After much experimentation he made six types of Veenas of different materials, namely *lau* (gourd), *gambhar* (a kind of fruit), *shvetachandan* (white sandal wood), *pittal* (brass), *tama* (copper) and *mishra-dhatu* (mixed metal). For each of these Veenas there was a separate bed with a *dhyana-mantra* (mantra for meditation) and the regular time for meditation written on it, and they were played only after due eulogy. This shows the depth of the reverential attitude with which Mahesh Chandra looked upon music.

As his fame spread far and wide as a Veena player, he was often frequented by hosts of music lovers. He was very religious minded, gentle and kind. His hobby was *Ayurvedic* medicine and he would treat the poor patients for free. He passed away in May of 1887 of *prayopaveshana*.*

BENGALEES OCCUPYING VARIOUS POSITIONS

Bengalees who had been educated here or held various other associations to the City were placed in important positions in and near Varanasi. Shital Prasad Gupta, the Headmaster of the Government School at Barrabanki and a good writer in Hindi literature, was most probably educated in Varanasi. It appears that Ramkumar Sen, who had taken Government service and come to Gazipur, settled in Kashi later on, where his son, Ramchandra Sen was educated. Ramchandra, called the 'Flower

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* His musical instruments have been preserved in the Ramnagar Fort Museum.

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of Benares College',[144] was appointed Inspector of Schools in the Province of Oudh. He was also the author of some works in English.

Ramkali Chauduri, who was born in 1828 in Krishnanagar of Bengal, came to Kashi at the age of ten after his mother was widowed. Ramkali was educated in the City and later on was appointed a judge. He was one of the leading men of Varanasi in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[145]

Kashiprasad Bandyopadhyay of the Bandyopadhyay family of Rajballabhpaḍa in Calcutta, lived in the City around the second quarter of the nineteenth century. He was appointed the *Serishtadar* and later on the Deputy Collector of the Benares Collectorate. Digambar Bandyopadhyay of the same family was appointed an English writer in the local *Foujdary Adalat* in or around 1831.[146]

Haragovinda, son of Kashiprasad, was born in Kashi and was educated at the Sanskrit College, where one of his preceptors was Dr Ballantyne, the renowned principal of the college. Haragovinda was appointed the *Tahasildar* of Bareilly, Nababganj and Faridpur and later on became the Deputy Collector of Sahjahanpur.[147]

Nabin Chandra Pal, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon of Varanasi, was credited with curing many critical diseases by administering medicines and performing operations.[148]

It also deserves mention that Radhamadhab Mallik was entrusted with the charge of the granaries of the City by the Government and was instrumental in setting up Duncan Ganj, the famous grain market of Varanasi in 1795.[149] Gola Dinanath (also known as Maharaj Ganj), another famous market-place of Varanasi that survives to this day, was also set up by another Bengalee called Dinanath in the nineteenth century.

MUSLIM ARISTOCRATS FROM BENGAL

In addition to the many Hindus who migrated from Bengal to Varanasi, there were also some Muslims from Bengal who settled here. Among them were celebrated personalities too, but unlike the Hindus, the purpose of their settlement in the City was not religious. Below are the names of some of the notable Muslims who migrated to Varanasi.

The sons of Mirkasim, the deposed and late Nawab of Bengal, named Sayeed Abdulla, Golam Ali Khan, Golam Husain Khan and Abdul Ally, came to Varanasi and lived in Adampura Mahalla.[150] They used to receive a stipend of Rs. 13,000 per month.[151] Nasir Ahmed Khan, the son-in-law of Mirkasim, used to live in Mulai Tola along with his brother. He was

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appointed the Hakim of the *Dewany Adalat* on the recommendation of Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident of Benares. Later on, the Nawab of Lucknow put him in charge of the *Dewany* and *Foujdary Adalat* of Lucknow, but as a result of a confrontation with Aga Mir there, he left that employment and returned to Kashi.[152]

Another celebrated Muslim who came to Kashi from Bengal was Ali Ibrahim Khan who served Nawab Mirkasim of Bengal as his minister. Ali Ibrahim was then appointed the first Hakim of Varanasi, that is, the Magistrate and Judge of the City, by Warren Hastings after the British occupation of Varanasi. Ibrahim carried out this responsible work most efficiently and, thereby, fully justified his appointment to this important position.* Ibrahim's four sons, named Nasiruddin Ali Khan, Mehdy Ali Khan, Hydar Ali Khan and Usgir Ali Khan, also lived in Varanasi.[153]

THE BENGALEE ASCETICS AND BRAHMINS

Varanasi, being a traditional seat of spirituality, attracted devotees, monastics and spiritual luminaries from every part of India including Bengal. One of the most remarkable ascetics of the Middle Ages was Shri Chaitanya who has already been referred to. Sri Ramkrishna's visit to Kashi has been mentioned before. Shyamacharan Lahiri, the celebrated Yogi, also lived in the City.

Bengalee Brahmins were also numerous in the City; their main professions were conducting worship and also teaching, though there were many others who lived only on alms. A number of Brahmins also migrated to Varanasi for passing their last days, dying there, and thus, attaining salvation.

BENGALEE WIDOWS BECOME SATIS

Satidaha, or the burning of a widow with her deceased husband, was one of the remarkable social customs in India during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Though we have discussed this issue at length in Chapter V, we shall refer here only to some cases of Bengalee *Satis* of the City. According to the report of the Benares Magistrate, thirteen widows became Sati in the City in 1815; among them at least one, Chandramani by name, aged seventy and widow to one Sudharam Vidyalankar, was a Bengalee and was burnt with her husband on April 11, 1815.[154] In 1816, another Bengalee woman called Sabita, aged 50, widow of Ramgopal

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* See Chapter XIX for details.

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Biswas, became a Sati on 2 March.[155] In 1817, Tarini Thakurani, aged 40, widow of Ramkanta Chakraborty, became Sati on 7 February and Parbati, widow of Ramkanta Bhattacharya, became Sati on 11 March.[156] A grand old woman, called Rajeshwari, whose age was 80 and whose husband was one Hareram Bhattacharya, also became a Sati on 22 October of the same year.[157]

BENGALEE SANSKRIT SCHOLARS

Varanasi, being an age-old seat of Oriental learning, also attracted many Bengalee scholars and students of Sanskrit in different branches of learning. Bengalee pandits had special proficiency in the *Navya Nyaya* and in most of the private seminaries of Varanasi primarily that was the subject they taught. The first Bengalee to become illustrious for his erudition and exceptional scholarship in Varanasi was Madhusudan Saraswati, who emerged in the sixteenth century. He is still remembered today in the City with great love and reverence.

It is not exactly known when the first *tol* or private academy of Sanskrit was set up by Bengalees in Varanasi in the Modern Age, or by whom, although it may have been one Shambhuchandra Vidyasagar, a teacher of *Nyaya*, *Smriti* and *Jyotisha*.[158] Devanarayan Vachaspati, who was possibly a contemporary of Shambhuchandra, also opened a tol where many Bengalee and non-Bengalee students pursued their studies.[159] Devanarayan's son, Ishwarchandra Nyayaratna, was also a great Sanskrit scholar.[160] Tarachanan Tarkaratna was appointed the court pandit of the Kashi Naresh. Mahamahopadhyay Rakhaldas Nyayaratna got a stipend of Rs. 50 from the chief of Hatwa and settled in the City. He was reported to have maintained about 200 students and taught them without taking any fees. It was perhaps he who had first got the title of *Mahamahopadhyay* from the Government in recognition of his extraordinary erudition.[161]

It deserves special mention that one Bengalee lady named Hati or Hatu Vidyalankar was not only a great scholar herself, but also used to run a tol and teach students in Kashi.[162] There were also many other Bengalee pandits living in Varanasi, and some of their names will be found in the list of pandits who certified Warren Hastings.[163]

Orthodox Brahmins generally considered it undignified and irreligious to be a regular employee of any employer, especially if the employer happened to belong to any low caste or non Hindu religion or to a foreign country. Though strong exception was taken to any deviation from this practice by the orthodox quarter, there were some Bengalee Brahmins who

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would accept such employment. Balaram Bhattacharya, for instance, entered the service of the Kashi Naresh and was appointed the Dewan of Maharaja Mahipnarain. This acceptance of employment incurred the displeasure of Balaram's father who flatly refused to take any part of his son's income.

BENGALEES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

The Benares Government Sanskrit College gradually overcame the reluctance of orthodox Brahmins towards accepting employment—even under the foreign British Government, and both Bengalee and non-Bengalee Brahmin pandits began accepting positions as teachers in that College when it was established in 1791.

Sarvashastraguru Tarkalankar Kashinath (Bhattacharya) Panditendra Vidyabahadur was a celebrated Bengalee scholar of Sanskrit in Varanasi. Lakshminarayan, his father, migrated to Varanasi from Navadwip in Bengal, which was also a reputed centre of Sanskrit learning.[165] Kashinath was employed as a pandit in the local British Residency and possibly, this is how he became the first local pandit to accept service under the foreign Government.

Kashinath also helped Charles Wilkins in acquiring his knowledge of Sanskrit and also in compiling and translating the *Mahabharata* in around 1780. Later, he became the founder and principal of the Benares Sanskrit College.*

Kashinath received a *zamindary* of seven villages in Thana Rohanya near Panchakroshi Road, possibly from the Government. He built a brick house and a Shiva Temple in the village of Amara in Rohaniya, which is about 5 km from Banaras Hindu University.[166] He was often surrounded by other pandits, including one Anupnarayan Tarkashiromani, who composed the *Samanjasa Vartika* of the *Vedantasutra*.[167] Kashinath was not only a great scholar, he was adept in the spiritual practice of Tantra.[168]

Besides Kashinath, there were at least two more Bengalee pandits, Shyamaprasad Bhattacharya, his son, and Ramprasad Tarkapanchanan, among the first of the teaching staff of the Sanskrit College, which consisted of nine teachers. The College also had Bengalee students on its roles right from its inception. There were also some pandits who taught at Sanskrit College while running *tols* in their homes at the same time. One of these was Jagannath Trakapanchanan, the famous Bengalee scholar of *Nyaya*.

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* For details, see Chapter XIII.

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It has also been said earlier that in the English Department of Benares Government Sanskrit College, two scholars of the Hindu College, both Bengalees, were appointed as teachers.

BENGALEE STUDENTS OF JAYNARAYAN SCHOOL

That Bengalees were pioneers in bringing about major reforms in the field of education through the introduction of a Western educational system in the City is quite evident from various data. Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal instituted a school in 1814, where, though other languages namely Bengali, Persian, Urdu and Hindi were taught, English was the main language of study.

The Christian Missionary Society was entrusted with the management of the school and that Jayanarayan's son, Raja Kalishankar Ghoshal, also continued to patronize the school after his father's death.

A list of students of 1820 of this school, which furnishes their full names, shows that among the boys who studied English in the four classes of this school, at least seventeen students were Bengalees, and all of these Brahmins by caste. This shows that more than 30% of the total number of students attending English classes here were Bengalee Brahmins with names like Taraprasad, Bhairab, Jiban, Gangacharan, etc.[169] The number of students of English fell to thirteen in 1823, increasing to twenty-one the following year then falling again to sixteen in 1830. Thus, the number of students fluctuated between fifteen and twenty annually. This number was obviously low, especially in view of the sizable Bengalee community here.

Bengali was also taught in this School, though this subject was restricted to the study of Christian Gospel and Fables in Bengali and in writing on palmyera leaves. In 1818, there were seventeen boys on the rolls in the Bengali class[170] with names like Hari, Ramdhan, Gopal, Kamal, etc.

The name of the Bengalee teacher who taught the Bengali class was Ramkissoon (Ramkrishna) Sarkar. The name Ramkrishna is known from a record of 1823, but it is not known whether he attended the school from its inception. In 1830, one Kenaram was the Bengali teacher of the school, again it is not known whether he replaced Ramkrishna or not. We do not know the qualifications or other details of these teachers, excepting that their salary was Rupees eight per month. There was also a provision for an Assistant Bengali teacher at a monthly salary of Rupees five. With hardly any opportunity for learning Bengali in the local schools and being surrounded by the Hindi speaking peoples of Varanasi, the Bengali spoken

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by local Bengalees underwent certain changes both in form and in accent. This led to the origin of a so-called *Banarasi Bangla*, or the Bengali spoken by Bengalees of Varanasi.

PRIMARY ENGLISH SCHOOL IN BENGALI TOLA

With the objective of protecting the purity of Bengali from the unwanted impact of Hindi, as well as teaching the English language to the local people, some leading Bengalees of the City came forward. Under the able leadership of Keshab Chandra Mitra, they were instrumental in starting the Primary English School in 1854 here. Later on this school developed into the Bengali Tola Intermediate College where a large number of Bengalees along with others were educated and where curriculums were designed for teaching Bengali, English and other subjects. A stone tablet set up in the Institution shows the list of the founders* and benefactors of this School among whom the majority was obviously Bengalees who were also the celebrated citizens of mid-nineteenth century Varanasi.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

When the Committee for Public Instruction was set up to deliberate and make decisions on the policies of the educational system of British India, local committees at the provincial level were also formed. Among three Indian members of the Benares Local Committee, appointed in 1836, two were Bengalees, Raja Kalishankar of the Ghoshal family and Raja Rajendralal Mitra of the Mitra family.[171]

BENGALEES IN THE FIELD OF MUSIC

Among the many renowned musicians of Varanasi were some Bengalees. We have already referred to Mahesh Chandra Sarkar, an illustrious Bengalee Veena player.[172] There was a good deal of interaction between Bengal and Varanasi musicians during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as Bengalees coming to Varanasi to learn music. There were also some reputed musicians of Varanasi who lived either temporarily or permanently in different parts of India, including Calcutta. Bechu Ustad of the *Mishra Gharana* of Varanasi settled in Calcutta and a musical connection was established between Bengal and Varanasi which

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* This list has been furnished in Chapter XIII.

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later spread even wider.[173] All of Bechu Ustad's sons were residents of Calcutta during the first parts of their lives, where they learnt music and joined the music world there. Later, surrounded by Bengalee disciples, Bechu Ustad remained very intimate with the musical society of Bengal. It would not be inappropriate to state that it was Bengalee musicians who finally inherited the Mishra Gharana of Varanasi.

Three of Bechu Ustad's five sons emerged as talented Sarangi players and singers. Kankar, the third, died prematurely. The second and fifth sons, Gaurishankar and Kalicharan, held prestigious positions in the musical field of Bengal till their deaths.[174] The eldest son, Shyamacharan, and the fourth son, Bundi (also a singer), became famous Tabla players. It was from this time that Tabla playing was added to the musical tradition of the Mishra Gharana.[175]

Shyamacharan Mishra learnt Tabla from the famous artist Lachmi Ustad, the eldest son of Ramkumar Mishra's sister of the Mishra family of Varanasi. Bundi Mishra learnt the Tabla from him. The youngest brother Kalicharan also learnt the Tabla but never appeared on the stage as a Tabla player. In the musical field of Calcutta, and for that matter of Bengal, Shyamacharan and Bundi Mishra earned fame as *Tabalia*. Later on Bundi Mishra became famous also as a Tabla teacher.[176]

By way of illustrating one musician who went from Bengal to Varanasi to study Sanskrit as well as for learning music and then returned to Bengal as a proficient musician, we may cite the example of Kalidas Chattopadhyay, better known in the world of music as Kali Mirza.[177]

Kalidas Chattopadhyay was born at Guptipara in the district of Hooghly in Bengal, probably in the year 1750. Born into a Brahmin family, he began to study Sanskrit and the Shastras, and incidentally, became fond of music. His interest in scripture and literature along with music grew fervent. One day in 1770, the young Kalidas left home for Varanasi, the celebrated seat of both learning and music. In Varanasi he started the study of the Shastras, including Vedanta anew, diving deep into the ocean of music at the same time. He learnt Dhrupad, Tappa, Thumri, and Ghazal. A few years passed in this way and then Kalidas left Kashi and visited Delhi and Lucknow to acquire further knowledge of music.

After spending ten or eleven years in these places he returned to his native home in Bengal in 1780 or 81, there becoming a renowned maestro and music teacher.[178] From age thirty to fifty-five, he lived in Guptipara of Bengal and neighbouring areas.[179]

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Next he went to the Darbar of Kumar Pratap Chand of Burdwan where he became the court singer and charmed everybody with his exquisite songs. In addition to singing *ragas* he had learnt at the famous centres of music, he also sang the Tappa, written by himself in Bengali, and became a pioneer in composing and performing classical songs in Bengali.

Later he joined celebrated singers, such as Sajju Khan, Lakshmikanta Biswas—a blind singer, and Mridangacharya Lala Kebal Kishan in the court of Gopimoham Tagore, an aristocrat of Calcutta.[180] In Calcutta, Kalidas Chattopadhyaya became well known as Kali Mirza, that is, Kali, the Prince among Musicians.[181] Kali Mirza was also a renowned music teacher. When Raja Rammohan Roy would stay in Calcutta, he often visited Kali Mirza to study music.[182]

In the year 1818, Kali Mirza, now old, along with his village kinsman Thakurdas, proceeded to Varanasi where he had once gone to study in his early youth.[183] At that time Uditnarain was the king of Varanasi, in whose court the noted Veena player Nirmal Khan, a descendant of Tansen, the Rabab player Jafar Khan, Tappa singer Sade Khan and other reputed musicians entertained. Invited to sing before such distinguished musicians at Uditnarain's court, Kali Mirza enchanted all with his brilliant performance and retained his fame as a singer even in old age. Kali Mirza lived his last two years in Varanasi, where, in the year 1820, the voice of this celebrated musician was silenced forever.[184]

The impact of *Banaras Gharana* music on the musicians of Bengal, especially those of Calcutta, is evident from the study of Banaras Gharanas like Prasuddhu Manohar's vocal music Gharana, Ramsahay's *Tabla Gharana*, Mishra's vocal music and the *Sarangi Gharana*.[186]

PUBLICATION OF MAGAZINES

A segment of Varanasi Bengalees devoted themselves to the culture of Bengali literature in particular, and journalism in general, by bringing out Bengali magazines like their counterparts in Calcutta, the details of which have been given in Chapter XIV.[187] Bengalees also published Hindi and Urdu journals in Varanasi.

BENGALEE SCULPTORS

Sculptors and architects from Rajasthan and Bengal also lent their support to the reconstruction of the temples and images of Varanasi once demolished by Muslims.[188] The sculptors of Nadia in Bengal were

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especially proficient in making images of stone. It is likely that from the time of the visits of Chandrashekhar and Krishnachandra, the Nadia *zamindars*, sculptors from Nadia started coming into the City in large numbers.[189]

Rani Bhavani also employed sculptors from Nadia to make Shivalingas and the work was completed quite satisfactorily.[190] Jayanarayan Ghoshal mentions the name of one Nayan Bhaskar in his *Kashi Parikrama*, who hailed from Halisahar of Bengal and was quite famous as a sculptor in Varanasi.[191] It is also likely that these Bengalee artisans were employed to make images of Durga, Kali, etc., that were worshipped by the enthusiastic Bengalees of Varanasi.

DURGA PUJA IN KASHI

The Durga Puja has become an important festival of present-day Varanasi in which both Bengalees and non-Bengalees take part with equal enthusiasm. We do not know, however, when and how this puja was introduced into the City. In *Kashi Parikrama*, written in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, it has been recorded that the Durga Puja was celebrated with great grandeur at the *satra* established by Rani Bhavani and also at different locations throughout Bengali Tola. Durga Puja was performed twice a year at this *satra*, in autumn and spring.[192]

Mitra family have claimed that it had introduced the Durga Puja into Kashi. Again, the Mukhopadhyay family of Madanpura has put forward the same claim. It stated that Kaliprasanna Mukhopadhyay of this family lived in the City around 1800, and it was his father (name unknown) who is said to have performed the Durga Puja as early as 1768. A stone tablet with the inscription *Puratan Durga Baḍi*, meaning old site of Durga worship, has been set up in the house of this family to indicate the antiquity of the Durga Puja at this site.[193]

The performance of Durga Puja at Rani Bhavani's *satra* also suggests that the Rani may have introduced this worship to the City much earlier than the Mukhopadhyays or Mitras claim, since she lived here before either of these families had arrived in Kashi.

The Puja in those days was generally performed by individual families though their doors were kept open to common visitors. Reports of the Durga Puja being celebrated with great grandeur in private houses and creating tremendous enthusiasm in these localities, were published in the *Kashivartaprakashika* in 1851.[194] Various entertainment like singing,

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dancing, and competitions in verse on popular topics by amateurs and professionals were special attractions during these celebrations. Durga Puja at the Mitra house in the Chowkhamba area was especially famous for elaborate arrangements and recreational activities. On these occasions distinguished persons of the City, including the Kashi Naresh and some Muslim princes and British officers stationed in Varanasi, were invited to the house. Durga Puja in the house of one Harasankar Gupta was also held with great eclat.[195]

THE KASHI NARESH AND BENGALEES

The Rajas of Kashi had close relations with some of the Bengalees of the City. They employed them in a few important posts and maintained intimate relations with some leading Bengalee families. These relations with Bengalees perhaps started when Kanta Babu, founder of the famous *zamindary* house of Kasimbazar of Bengal, saved the ladies of the Kashi Raj family from dishonour at the hands of the sepoys of Warren Hastings, which has already been referred to. Balaram Bhattacharya, a Bengalee Brahmin, was appointed Dewan of Raja Mahipnarain Singh, whose spiritual preceptor was a Bengalee monk of the Rajguru Math named Swami Swayamprakashananda.[196] A few more instances of such relationship now follow :

Babu Girish Chandra Dey was also employed as Dewan to the Kashi Naresh; Jayanarayan Ghoshal helped the Kashi Naresh in his monumental translation of the *Mahabharata*; the Kashi Naresh used to visit the Mitras at Chowkhamba during the Durga Puja.[197] Tarachand Tarkaratna, the famous Bengalee Sanskrit scholar who took a leading part in the *Shastrartha* held in Varanasi with Swami Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj,[198] was Court Pandit to Maharaja Ishwarinarain Singh.

THE LOCAL PEOPLE AND BENGALEES

Besides the close relations of some of the Bengalee zamindars and elite with their counterparts of the City, there was, of course, informal mixing between Bengalees and the local gentry. Still, relations between the local people and the Bengalees were not really as close and cordial as they should have been. The local people of other communities could not always appreciate the distinctive Bengalee identity. The non-vegeterian food habits of Bengalees was another source of criticism. Again, the close relations displayed between the British Government and Bengalees could hardly be approved of by some, especially when the Bengal capital of

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Calcutta had become the seat of British India. This led some to view Bengalees with contempt and suspicion as alleged supporters and well-wishers of a foreign-based imperialist government.

BENGALEES—A COMMUNITY OF DISTINCTION

It appears from these facts that while the Bengalees were a distinct community, maintaining an identity of their own, they also became part of the multifarious landscape that is Varanasi, playing a significant role in numerous facets of life and culture here. The Bengalee community of the City suffered from drawbacks, too. Widows especially, who had to depend on others for subsistence while passing their last days here, occasionally fell into a pitiable condition. Great was their woe and suffering when this support was withdrawn and there was no one to look after them. Of course, they could resort to the dole houses, or *satras*, run by rich Bengalees for the free distribution of food among distressed widows, Brahmins and monks, but living on charity and leading an idle life had a demoralizing effect on a segment of the Bengalees of the City, including some of the widows, which marred the good name of all Bengalees.

Again, there were women who, deserted by their male partners or compelled to leave their native lands, took refuge in Varanasi and were forced to earn livings through questionable means.[199] Some of these women were Bengalees, references to whom have been given in Bengali works like *Patitar Atmakatha*, The Autobiography of a Fallen Woman.[200]

Nevertheless, Bengalees flourished in Varanasi from the end of the eighteenth till the beginning of the twentieth century as a community of distinction. When the capital of India was moved from Calcutta to Delhi in 1912, when Bengal was divided as a result of the partition of India in 1947, and, again, when the Estates Acquisition Act of 1953 was passed, Bengalees of Varanasi in general, and Bengalee landlords in particular, were also adversely affected. This resulted in the decline of their status considerably in the local society.

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APPENDIX

List of Bengalee Pandits of 1788

Ananda Chandra Bhattacharya
Kashiram Chatterji
Kishen Chand Sarvabhouma
Kashinath Methal (?)
Kaliprasad Siddhanta
Kriparam Tarkasiddhanta
Krishnaram Sarvabhouma
Krishnadev Chatterji
Krishnamohan Das
Kaliprasad Sharma
Kaliprasad Sharma
Khelaram Sharma
Gangadhar Vidyasagar
Govindaram Nyaya Panchanan
Gangadhar Vidyavagish
Chitta Charan (?) Tagore
Chandaracharan Sharma
Jagannath Sharma
Jayanarayan Ghoshal
Jagamohan Mukherji
Trilok Chandra Ganguli
Dulal Nyayalankar
Nityananda Sharma
Narayan Mishra
Prannath Tagore
Vishwanath Mishra
Vakuleshwar Nyaya Panchanan
Balaram Bhattacharya
Vishwanath Chatterji
Bhairavcharan Seal
Bhutaram Vachaspati
Manas Dikshit
Jugalkishore Upadhyay
Rammohan Palit
Ramhari Das
Ramnidhi Das
Ramcharan Vidyavagish
Ramsundar Roy
Ausan Mishra
Kishen Mangal Sharma
Kishen Chand Mukherji
Kaliprasad Bhattacharya
Krishnananda Sarvabhouma
Kaliprasad Sharma
Kashinath Sharma
Kaliprasad Sarkar
Kalidas Siddhanta
Kevalram Bhattacharya
Kalishankar Sharma
Gangaram Nyaya Panchanan
Gokul Krishna Vidyasagar
Gangahari Banerji
Gopal Shankar Nyaya Panchanan
Chandrashekhar Vidyavagish
Jagannath Roy
Jaydev Sharma
Jayakrishna Sharma
Jayshankar Sharma
Darpanarayan Bhattacharya
Devnarayan Sharma
Nilmani Tagore
Paramananda Ganguli
Prankrishna Palit
Vidyanath
Braja Kishore Ghosh
Vishnu Shankar Dikshit
Vishwanath Ghosh
Bhawani Shankar Sarkar
Manikchand Sharma
Jugalmohan Sharma
Ramsundar Sai
Ramshankar Bose
Ramnath Dikshit
Ramcharan Banerji
Ramprasad Banerji
Ramcharan Chakravarti

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Ramchandra Vidyasagar
Rudraram Sarkar
Ramkrishna Sharma
Ramnarayan Seal
Ramshankar Banerji
Rammohan Bhattacharya
Ramnath Sharma
Ramjay Ganguli
Ramkanta Vidyalankar
Lakshman Vidyavagish
Lakshminarayan Nyayavagish
Shambhunath Upadhyay
Shyam Vidyavagish
Shivaprasad Vachashpati
Sadananda Tarkavagish
Haricharan Mallik
Ramram Bakshi
Ramlochan Mukherji
Ramram Siddhanta
Raghunath Palit
Rambhadra Nyayalankar
Ramram Siddhanta
Ramram Sharma
Ramsantosh Chatterji
Ramdas Sharma
Lakshminarayan Sharma
Shobhanath Sharma
Santu Singh
Shrinath Tarkavagish
Shivanarayan Banerji
Haridev Tarkavagish
Harikrishna

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CHAPTER XVII

THE EUROPEANS

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT : GENESIS AND TRAITS

European settlement in Varanasi all but coincided with British annexation of the City in 1781. Prior to that the British Resident and, presumably, a few European businessmen and indigo planters settled in and around the area. The pattern of the European settlement here followed much the same as that of other smaller cities of British India, especially in the Upper Provinces, and shared certain common features.

The first and foremost was the predominance of the British among the European settlers. Secondly, the numbers of these foreigners were insignificant in contrast to the vast multitudes of Indians inhabiting these cities. In the case of Varanasi especially, the heart of this City was too congested to suit a European sense of sophistication and commodious habitation. Hence these settlers, unlike their Muslim predecessors, preferred to reside at a distance from the very beginning and there they remained more an isolated colony. There was a cantonment near the Civil Station so that they could enjoy the protection of the military.

Generally, all these settlements in India would consist of four distinct classes, which appeared on the scene mostly successively and in certain cases simultaneously. While civil servants and militia would start a colony, these earliest settlers would be succeeded by civil population in search of personal fortune, and finally, by Christian missionaries. There was also a steady flow of travellers and visitors to such places for either shorter or longer periods. In consequence of transferable nature of the services of civil servants and military personnel, there was a mobility of settlers from one place to another. Even some of those civil servants engaged in personal business activities were not keen on settling in these places. Again, the European colonies of big cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras could provide all sorts of facilities, whereas the seclusion and hardship of smaller settlements in places like Varanasi presented no appeal for prolonged stays. Thus, these smaller European settlements tended to be

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in a state of flux and more resembled a 'camp life' than permanent settlements. Nevertheless, there were those exceptional individuals like W. A. Brooke of Varanasi, who loved the place like a second home and would work and die for it.

HEBER'S ACCOUNT OF EARLY BRITISH SOCIETY IN UPPER INDIA

Bishop Heber presented a general picture of the English stations of the Upper Provinces in the third decade of the nineteenth century in his travel account, *Narrative of a Journey*. Here he observes that English settlement was sparse in these areas and that these expatriates maintained informal relations among themselves, recording :[1]

> 'The English in the upper provinces are, of course, thinly scattered in proportion either to the multitude of heathen, or the extent of territory. They are, however, more numerous than I expected, though there are very few, indeed, who are not in the civil or military employ of Government. To return, however, to the English Society in the upper provinces. It is of course composed of nearly the same elements with that of Calcutta, the officers who take their turn of duty here, being most of them at different times called by business or promotion to the Presidency. Each of the civil stations forms a little society within itself, composed of the Judge, the Collector, the Registrar, the Station Surgeon, and Postmaster. The military stations are strictly camps, composed of huts for the men with thatched cottages for the officers, ranged in regular lines, with a hospital, and sometimes though seldom, a church and Chaplain.
>
> Neither the civil nor military officers have much intercourse with the natives, though between officers and magistrates of a certain rank, and the natives of distinction, there is generally an occasional interchange of visits and civilities. Society both civil and military, is less formal up the country than in Calcutta, and the plainness and cordiality of manners increases as we approach the northern and western frontier....'

Next, Heber further describes how life of the civil servants in these places differed from that of Calcutta :

> 'The civilians live in more style and appear in public with a train of attendants on horseback and foot. Yet even with this there is a plainness and freedom from restraint which they appear to lose when they come in sight of Government House, and which makes me apprehend that a life in Hindostan Proper is far happier, as well as more wholesome for body and mind, than on the banks of the Hooghly. Of course, among these different functionaries there is an abundant difference of character and talents; but the impression made on my mind is favourable, on the whole, to their diligence and good intentions; nor can there be more useful or amiable character than some of the elder servants of the Company who eschewing Calcutta altogether, have devoted themselves for many years to the advantage of the land in which their lot is thrown, and are looked up to, throughout considerable

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districts, with a degree of respectful attachment which it is not easy to believe counterfeited. Mr. Brooke, of Benares, is precisely a character of this description.'

The above account depicts mainly the positive aspects of British settlement in the Upper Provinces, but there were certainly negative aspects, to be discussed later, of which he was evidently not cognizant.

EARLY PICTURE OF THE EUROPEAN STATION AT VARANASI :

Most of the European population resided in a place called Secrole, also known as 'English Benares',[2] about two miles north-west of the central City. Rev. William Tennant, who visited the City in 1798,[3] recorded that at that time the number of the Europeans was very small; with the Judge, Registrar, Collector, and a few civil servants, constituting the whole of the Company's establishment there, and in addition to that a few private merchants and planters made up the whole of this society. He obviously failed to mention the British military personnel here.[4] Other Europeans, those not in the service of the Government, lived in different parts of the City.

Random and unrestrained settlement of Europeans, including Britons not in service of the Government, was not quite welcomed in Varanasi by the Government. The local authority was asked to send reports about such settlers and to keep a watch over them. In fact, at the outset the Government was reluctant to grant Christian missionaries permission to intensify their activities in the British Empire, such as the opening of churches,[5] in apprehension of popular resentment.

Although travellers from Europe, especially from England, or officers from other stations would visit the local settlers occasionally, the latter obviously suffered from feelings of estrangement from their homeland or from the larger European society of the British Indian capital at Calcutta. The local climate was altogether different from what they were used to and, especially in summer, it was too hot for them to bear. Flies and mosquitoes were a scourge; food was not to their liking and the consumption of beef was not permitted by the authority lest it should hurt the religious sentiment of the local people. The local language was rarely learnt, hence, communication was not easy. Amusement and recreation, the settlers were fond of, were not to be found here. Invitations to the houses of the local *rais* on special occasions were restricted to the high ranking officers of the Government and even these privileged few rarely appreciated the Indian music and dancing performed on some of these occasions. There was no satisfactory medical facilities along modern lines.

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Academic bodies for the discussion of modern arts and sciences and libraries with books in European languages were but a dream. Thus, at the initial stage of British settlement in Varanasi there were no social or intellectual stimuli worth mentioning. Even the practice of religion was difficult, as there was not even a church to attend.

What was worse, in cases of exigencies, help from headquarters at Calcutta was not easily available owing to the great distance between the two cities. Of course, there was the local garrison to depend upon, but its number was alleged to have been insignificant in the event of a serious outbreak of trouble. Above all, the periodic transfer of civil servants compelled them to adjust constantly to new people and new environments, which must have posed a special problem for them. One may well imagine how difficult it was for these Europeans to abide under such adverse circumstances and only those of special temperament, incentive and motive could make the seemingly impossible possible. From this point of temperament, the adventurous spirit and active nature of the Europeans were perhaps uniquely suitable to such conditions.

Again, as regards incentives, the civil servants got lucrative salaries from the Government and enjoyed special powers and position. In addition, some of them utilized their residence in India for making private fortunes. The civil population earned vast sums engaging in profitable enterprises like the jewellery trade and indigo plantation.[6] As for motivation, the ecclesiastics were deeply committed to preaching and converting the local population to Christianity.

The following is the first available list of some British officers living at the Varanasi station, who donated the amounts mentioned with their names for the poor inhabitants of Madras in 1783.[7]

Name	Amount of Contribution
Markham—Resident	Rs. 1000 /-
Benu (?)	Rs. 500 /-
Playdel	Rs. 100 /-
Barnet	Rs. 100 /-
Davis	Rs. 50 /-
Dr. Balfour, Civil Surgeon	Rs. 100 /-
Capt. Hogan—In charge of Army of the Local Station	Rs. 500 /-
Lieutt. Williamson	Rs. 100 /-
Lieutt. Tritu	Rs. 100 /-

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Another list of Europeans, dated December 30, 1815, shows the names of subscribers to the building of a church at Secrole.[8]* This list is more exhaustive and includes both British and other European nationals, civil and military officers, ecclesiastics and the civil population living at this station. These lists show that around the beginning of nineteenth century, all categories of European settlers were found in the City and also that their number had begun to increase.

DETAILS OF THE SETTLEMENT

When Prinsep took a census in 1829, he showed that the number of houses occupied by Europeans in Secrole was 114 and that the number of residents in Secrole was 7092,[9] which means that there were about 52 persons on average living in each house, which is far from credible. Therefore, in addition to the Europeans living in these houses, there were many others who were most probably military and lived in barracks. Prinsep's census also fails to throw any light upon those Europeans living in places other than Secrole.[10] It may also be noted here that in addition to Europeans, there was also a large number of local people living in Secrole and adjacent areas, since the same census shows that there were 21 wards in Secrole with 2,754 houses owned and where 11,876 people lived.[11] At least a segment of these local people were presumably employed in the service of the Europeans here.

Though increasingly populated, the natural surroundings of this European settlement were not very pleasant mainly because of a want of greenery. As early as in 1803, Valentia writes, '...the houses of the English at Secrole are handsome although they look naked for want of trees.'[12] The same lack of greenery was also noticed some three decades later by a Polish traveller named Malachowski who records around 1830 :

> 'The European colony Sekeoll (Secrole) lies half a mile beyond the city. All the English officials live there and the garrison stays in camp. This colony has many beautiful houses which can pass in our country (Poland) as palaces. It has a Church and even a small theatre which is highly and elegantly decorated. This place looks extremely like a desert due to trees being rarely visible on it and gentle current of air.'[13]

Within three or more decades of Prinsep's census, the settlement grew both in dimension and in importance, which is evident from Rev. Sherring's 1860 account of the settlement.[14] Sherring records :

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* This list has been furnished in the Appendix of Chapter VI.

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'...foreign residents of Benares lived chiefly at Secrole, an extensive suburb on the north-west side of the City; this station was divided by the Varuna river, to the south of which the greater portion of military cantonments and buildings connected therewith were situated, and, likewise the English Church, the Government College, the Medical Hall, the old mint, (one of) the town residences of the Maharaja of Benares, the three Missions of the Church of England and of the London and Baptist Societies, and the courts of law of the civil and sessions judges, the deputy judge of small causes were also situated; to the north of Varuna were the houses of the civil officers of the Government, the courts of the commissioners of the division, and of the collector and other magistrates of the district, several bungalows inhabited by deposed Rajas and other natives, the Wards' Institution for the residence of Indian noblemen's sons who had been under special charge of the Government and were also pursuing their studies at Queen's College, the beautiful public gardens being supported by subscription and the swimming bath; the jail in which, occasionally, seventeen hundred persons were confined, the Lunatic Asylum which was established in 1812 and sheltering one hundred and ten patients, the blind and leper asylum and the cemetery were also situated north of Varuna.'

Thus, with the passage of time, Government establishments started growing and parallel with this, an increase in the number of employees. Communications were also becoming better so that the early 'camp life' of the European settlers was slowly being transformed into a regular full-fledged community complete with public gardens and recreational facilities like a swimming pool, a ballroom and a theatre. Emily Eden, who had visited Varanasi in 1837 with Lord Godolphin, attended a ball arranged in their honour. She reminisces in this connection :

'On Monday (20th November 1837) evening we went to the ball again, given to us by the station. They have a theatre here, and had boarded over the pit, and by leaving some forest scenery standing on the stage, with our band playing from under the pasteboard trees; they made out a very pretty ball-room, much the best we have seen in the Mofusil and there were plenty of ladies old and young, who seemed to be very glad of a dance....'[15]

Newspapers from Calcutta were now becoming available and a journal in English was also printed in the City itself.[16] Queen's College was placed on a new footing under the leadership of a European principal. An academic body, Benares Institute, was also set up where Western arts and sciences and current topics were discussed with enthusiasm through the medium of English by both Europeans and Indians. Slowly, a new elite society consisting of local Indians and those who had migrated here from other provinces grew. Here, ideas were discussed and opinions were exchanged. This changed milieu helped to remove the dull monotony and

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tiresome loneliness of settlers to a great extent. But some of the basic constraints of foreign settlement were always there; especially the constant tension suffered by the administration on occasions of agitation by the Indians, endangering the very survival of the European settlement. Thus, in spite of the presence of a cantonment in Varanasi, events like the uprising of Wazir Ali Shah, the House Tax movement, the Jail Mess agitation or, above all, the Sepoy Mutiny, could have escalated and wiped out the entire settlement unless handled carefully. In such a backdrop, European settlement here, and more specifically, British settlement, hardly transformed itself into a regular society but was reduced to, as it were, a grafted foreign habitat in an Indian setting.

RELATIONS AMONG THE EUROPEANS

Relations among the civil servants were marked by cordiality and hardly reflected differences in power and position. The bonds of comradeship, not only between Company personnel but also among all the British and other Europeans of this station, was observed by some European travellers too. Malachowski, the aforementioned Polish traveller, tells about the brotherhood combining all Europeans. He writes in this connection :

> 'In another place I have spoken about the hospitality of the English in Eastern India and about the brotherhood combining all Europeans who under the common name, lose their individual national entities in this part of the world and thus forget their mutual prejudice.'[17]

There were, of course, exceptions to this testimony, as witnessed on the occasion of the vigorous difference of opinion between the Magistrate and the Judge of the City during the Weight Movement here.[18] This must have not only strained their personal relationship, but also caused the local Commissioner to apprehend risks of fatal consequences to the integrity of the administration. On the whole, however, relations among the Europeans were close and cordial with the patriarchal figure of these settlements, generally the topmost Government official of that station. In Varanasi, it was W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General and Senior Judge, whose amiable and affectionate behaviour made him popular among the local Europeans and perfectly suitable to his position of leadership for a considerable period.[19]

European travellers and other visitors were occasionally accommodated by these settlers and by a simple stretch of imagination,

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one can easily guess how warmly these guests must have been welcomed by the local Europeans in their state of isolation. It was mainly through these travellers that all kinds of information ranging from events at headquarters to news of home could be procured by the settlers, and who, in turn, must have exchanged local news and information with them. Moreover, the joy of the settlers must have heightened on the occasions of visits by VIPs like Lord Valentia, Bishop Heber or Lord Godolphin, or when the Governor-Generals, for example, Lord Wellesley or Lord Hastings, visited Varanasi and held *darbar* there.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIANS AND EUROPEANS

Relations between the local population and Europeans were primarily those between the former and the British, since the British comprised the overwhelming majority of Europeans. It deserves mention that these relations were largely shaped by the British administration and the people's reactions to it. From the study of the civil discontents in Varanasi under the British we come to know that Hindus, including those of high caste, and Muslims alike took part in agitation against the Government. Moreover, there were fundamental differences between the Indians and Europeans with regard to their physical, educational, cultural, social, political and religious backgrounds. Generally speaking, while Europeans despised the local people and regarded them as inferior, the latter reciprocated by regarding them as unholy and unworthy of even a touch. Medicine from European physicians was sometimes refused.[20] Both dining with Europeans and visiting Europe by ship were strictly forbidden by Hindu society. Once, when the young Maharaja of Vizianagaram, residing at Varanasi, was asked by one of his European guests whether he wanted to visit Europe, the latter replied in the negative, most possibly because of these social injunctions.[21] Of course there were differences between Hindus and Muslims, and again, between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, concerning attitudes to the British.[22]

Muslims were especially aggrieved when the British snatched away the reins of administration from their hands, while the Hindus, who were generally abhorred by them, were gaining power and position under the British. Muslims were also hurt by what they deemed the unworthy treatment of their royal houses by the British Government.[23] As regards Brahmins, their main cause of grievance was that the new Government

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robbed them of some of their prerogatives, such as special exemptions from usual modes of punishment and in treating them as equals in the eyes of the law with the other Hindu castes.

Now let us study the different segments of the European population and their relationships with the local people.

SEGMENTS OF EUROPEAN SOCIETY *vis-à-vis* THE LOCAL SOCIETY

The Civil Servants

This class consisted of the judicial, civil, revenue and medical officers of Government, the topmost position being held by the Resident, followed by the Agent to the Governor-General and the Senior Judge. The post nearest in importance was held by the Magistrate. Still later, when the Benares Division was formed and put under the charge of the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner, these men enjoyed the highest position and honour among the civil servants. Three civilians were very conspicuous for their genuine love for the City and its people and also for their extraordinary service during this period. They were Jonathan Duncan,* the British Resident (1788-1794), W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General and Senior Judge and Chief Judge of Appeal (1792-1833), and James Prinsep, Assay Master (1820-1830).

Jonathan Duncan

The appointment of Duncan to replace James Grant as Resident of Varanasi in 1788 proved to be sagacious from the administrative point. Duncan continued in that post till 1794. He was a man of great integrity and initiative and was the most successful Revenue Officer of his time. He occupied a prominent position among British civil servants for his administrative reforms, wise revenue assessment, and his initiative in stopping infanticide in and around Varanasi. He also became the chief instrument in the founding of the Government Sanskrit College in Varanasi in 1791.

It has been recorded by a number of travellers who had visited the City some period after the departure of Duncan that the local people remembered Duncan with a sense of high esteem and love. 'Duncan Sahib ki chhota bhai,' literally meaning the younger brother of Duncan, was a usual term of compliment applied to any European who actuated an unusual spirit of kindness and liberality towards the people.[24]

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* For further details on Jonathan Duncan, also see Chapters XIII and XIV.

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W. A. Brooke

W. A. Brooke was equally popular and respected by Europeans and locals alike.[25] William Augustus Brooke, born in England in 1753, arrived in India on May 31, 1769, and was appointed Revenue Chief of Bihar on October 18, 1781, an office he held till the post of Revenue Chief was abolished in 1787. In April of 1787, he became Collector of Patna and in July of that same year he was transferred to Shahabad where he also served as Collector till 1792. He was then appointed Judge and Agent to the Governor-General at Varanasi and occupied this post until he breathed his last on July 10, 1833, at the fairly old age of eighty-one.[26] As a matter of fact, in consequence of his holding such an important position for such a long period, we come across the name of Brooke in various contexts of the present study. With all probability, he was a solitary example of a civilian who had completely identified himself with Varanasi where he died after a long period of dedicated service. He could speak both Hindusthani and Persian and was in the habit of conversing with local residents of high rank. Heber describes him as a 'very fine, healthy, old man, and oldest among the Company's resident servants there, his manners singularly courteous and benevolent.'[27]

Malachowski's personal reminiscence of Brooke, whom he had met when Brooke was near the end of his life, is fascinating for its warm personal touch :[28]

> 'For 62 years this honourable old gentleman had been living in India enjoying the best of health, looked very much hale and hearty in external appearance, which along with many other similar instances prove that the climate of Hindustan may be the healthiest for those who live in the same latitude of earth. Older Englishmen, remembering old times and looking with dissatisfaction at the recent trend, point out Mr. Brooke as a pleasant picture of old English and contemporary manners of the period when George III ruled. In fact, nothing can equal his kindness combined with his decent respectability, qualities which are in fact quite foreign to the present manners of enlightened people. Mr. Brooke told me in a delightful and engaging manner about many details of the growth of English power in the East; he considered it to be very strong. No precautionary measure and intelligent steps by which this was achieved were neglected. He also recalled various anecdotes about Pit, Sheridan and Fox, but doubted whether the present century impulse had been able to make the human community happy. He said that he would no more think of returning to Europe because he would regret the effacing of old traces of character and customs of his nation. There might have been some presumption in this talk but there was much truth also. Mr. Brooke was respected by all, otherwise Rajas of Benares would not have regarded him as their father. He is the founder of

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telegraphic line from Benares to Calcutta. He was eagerly busy with administration of justice, improving the status of inhabitants of the country and their enlightenment.'

It also deserves mention that James Prinsep, another distinguished civil servant of Varanasi dedicated his book of painting entitled *Benares Illustrated* to Brooke 'as a tribute due to his public character, and in grateful remembrance of the amiable qualities which have endeared him alike to Hindoo, Muslim and Christian inhabitants (of Benares)'.[29]

James Prinsep

As above, we come across the name of James Prinsep on numerous occasions throughout this study and have documented his many contributions to modern Varanasi in various chapters.

Some General Observations

Top-ranking government officers were sometimes invited to the residences or garden-houses of the local nobility and deposed chiefs on special occasions, when the latter were sometimes accompanied by distinguished European guests from other stations or 'Home'. But neither the number of such invited officers nor the occasions of these invitations were numerous. There was also the social censuring of any unrestrained mixing between these parties.[30]

When the British had taken the possession of the City, their attitude towards the Indians was somewhat different from what it became in a subsequent period. In the early days, they remained cautious and refrained from doing anything which might injure local, social or religious sentiments. Rather, they made calculated and diplomatic gestures toward appeasing them. This is best exemplified when Warren Hastings was reported to have fanned the Shahazadah of Delhi while travelling on an elephant through the streets of Varanasi[31], and, again, when Hastings ordered Magistrate Ali Ibrahim Khan to construct the *Naubut Khana* of the Vishwanatha Temple. The same cautious and appeasing attitude of the Government was observed when the Government Sanskrit College was founded, when proposed public sanitation measures were withdrawn, and when the deposed royal families were honoured. In certain cases the authorities were even reluctant to sever extra allowances to the beneficiaries who had forfeited their right to such allowances.[32]

Gradually, the conciliatory gestures and sober attitude of the British Government towards the local people showed signs of decline in

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consequence of their consolidation of power in India. This change in behaviour towards the Indians became quite apparent when Government officers from top to bottom exhibited a haughty temper, indulged in unrestrained acts without caring for the sentiment of their subjects, and exhibited gross expressions of superior power and position at the cost of all sobriety and propriety that had marked the character of English gentry or even of the earlier British officers of the Raj.

The Militia

Two or three battalions of soldiers, both Indian and European, were stationed at the local cantonment. That a good number of British army officers also lived with them is evident from the list of subscribers to the construction of the chapel already referred to. Usually, under the strict discipline of the military, these soldiers were not allowed to move about at will within the City, but when allowed more freedom, European soldiers sometimes seized these opportunities to indulge in drinking and other mischievous recreations.[33] Some even went so far as to humiliate or inflict physical injury upon innocent citizens without the slightest provocation. These nefarious acts committed by some military officers caused serious concern not only among the local people but also within Government circles. The following is an example of such an outrage :

On January 26, 1849, Pandits Govind Deo Tokekar and Betthal Shastri, two professors of the Benares Sanskrit College, were on their way to the residence of Dr J. R. Ballantyne, the Principal, when, without any provocation, one of four Englishmen in a passing carriage viciously lashed out at them with a whip. The professors narrowly escaped injury yet 'deeming themselves to have been wantonly insulted and considering the act one of which the authorities should take notice' the two submitted a petition, originally written in Hindi, to Principal Ballantyne for necessary action.[34]

The petition reads as follows :

'We beg to represent that while we were going to visit you (Principal Ballantyne) a little distance outside of your compound—4 Englishmen were proceeding in a carriage towards the eastward—one of whom—the one that was driving, made a blow with his whip at us, with such force that had it struck us, it would have drawn blood—but fortunately the whip fell short by about two fingers' breadth.

The only fault we committed was that we had looked once towards them which we presume to be the cause of offence—and although we have escaped from actual injury—yet as it is a matter of reproach that there should be such persons amongst

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so superior a race as the English—we have represented the circumstance—and humbly beg that you will kindly take the matter into consideration—and have such arrangements adopted, as shall ensure that in future the like may not occur—we beg also, that this, our petition, may be submitted to the Magistrate—as this will be of great service to us.'[35]

Principal Ballantyne also considered this incident a great grievance that 'respectable and peaceably disposed native gentlemen should be subjected to such treatment without any assignable cause—their person's exposed to violence and their feelings outraged'. Ballantyne, under the conviction that the offenders were young British army officers of the local regiment, forwarded the victims' petition to D. P. Macleod, the Magistrate, for investigation, who then brought the matter to the attention of Major General J. Kennedy, Commander, Benares Division.[36]

In the early days of the British Raj, when a long-term stay, or even visit, by a British woman to India was a rare phenomenon, many British expatriates found it difficult to procure a bride of their own nationality. This difficulty in procuring brides, especially in the case of soldiers and army officers, induced them to marry Indian women usually belonging to the lower strata of society. Such marriages, though not objected to, if not encouraged by the Government in view of the prevailing situation, received little social recognition from either Indian or British gentry. These Indian brides had to forsake their religion for marriage and received ceremonial conversion into Christianity. Consequently, these converted Indian brides formed the nucleus of the converts at Varanasi.*

The Missionaries

The Christian missionaries stationed here were obviously inclined to mix with the local people as a part of their conversion strategy. They overcame some of the obstacles to such socialising through learning the local language and in undertaking educational enterprises and other public spirited works which were looked upon as praiseworthy. Reverend Corrie, for example, was reported to have been popular even among the pandits of Varanasi for his perfect knowledge of Hindusthani and frank discussion of religious topics.[37] The small numbers of such missionaries, competition between these different Church establishments, Government vigilance over their activities, the people's gradual awareness of the conversion motive behind such works, and finally, the overpowering challenge of Hinduism, were all barriers to real rapport between the missionaries and

* For details, see Chapter VI.

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the local people. Even the few Indians who fraternised with the missionaries and had some intimacy with them, rarely ventured beyond socially permitted limits in this regard.

The Intellectuals

As noted earlier, by the middle of the nineteenth century, a new elite class emerged in Varanasi who founded an academic body called the Benares Institute in collaboration with local Europeans.[38] The Institute served as an intellectual platform for Western educated citizens and Europeans to meet and exchange views on socio-economic, religious, educational and cultural subjects.[39] Moreover, among the Europeans there were quite a few who subscribed to the magazines published locally in Hindi.*

The Civil Population

Such population included a variety of classes, nationalities and professions. In addition to the British, there were the French, the German, the Swiss, the Russian, the Greek, and the Portuguese, who followed different professions varying from diamond merchants to indigo planting and to service under the local nobles.

Unlike their official counterparts, many of them lived within the City or just at its outskirts,[40] which provided them with an opportunity to mix freely with the local population. It appears that these Europeans were also not very keen on keeping close contact with the official quarters of this station. Again, as they were not subject to the official procedure of routine transfer or rotation from one station to another, they could stay here longer, but had to obtain special permission from the Government to do so. In this connection, the following directive from Headquarters in Calcutta dated December 24, 1787, was issued :

> '...after the 1st of next March (1788) no European being a British subject not in the Company's (Government) service will be supposed to reside at Benares without obtaining the particular license of Government.'[41]

The purpose of this directive was to check and control the European civil population who would like to reside in Varanasi. The following reports[42] of the conduct and character of such Europeans living in Varanasi, dated January 17, 1788, and prepared in view of the above order, helps us to form an idea about such people in the early days of British

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* For details, see Chapter XIV.

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settlement of the Upper Provinces. This report was prepared by Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident, in collaboration with Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan, the Magistrate of Varanasi.[43]

James Augustus Grant : He was a man of liberal education who possessed the best disposition of communication. He had been acting as a Post Master, a charge he had obtained under the former Resident and he continued to hold the post. He also entered into large concerns in trade which he carried on since the arrival of Duncan by fair dealing and honest industry, but without any aid from the Government. The following observation about all the European merchants here that they 'had nothing else but their own exertions and credit to depend on, and conduct their commerce on the same footing as the natives' was true and applicable in all cases, including that of Grant.

Prager : He remained in the City in the capacity of a diamond merchant by a covenant with the Government. That covenant permitted Prager to proceed to Varanasi and reside there for the purpose of trading in pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones 'in order to afford to individuals (Europeans) means of remitting their property to Europe and to secure to the Company their accustomed duties'. By virtue of this order, dated October 4, 1786, Prager was thus allowed the monopoly on such trade. He was not a settled inhabitant here, but divided his time between Varanasi and the Presidency Division. He used to reside near the Pishachmochan Ghat in Varanasi.

Gurdiner : He came up here in August of 1787 with the Governor-General's permission to settle as a merchant. He resided partly here and partly at Mirzapur. Nothing exceptionable was known about his conduct.

Davies : He lived here for several years and came as a writer to Graham, the Resident. He also served Markham in the same capacity. He afterwards kept a shop for European goods which, due to various adverse circumstances, was the source of his getting involved in debt to sundry persons here. Saadat Ali Khan, the deposed Nawab of Oudh, who had been residing in Varanasi, once employed him as a teacher of English. At the time of this report he had been under confinement, in consequence of a decree passed against him by Saadat Ali Khan for money he was reported to have lent to him. However, Davies was unemployed at that time and was in a very distressed condition. Duncan would willingly have employed him as a writer but he could not as 'Saadat Ali thought his honour should be thereby affected'.

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Henry Brown : He was a huntsman, a very quiet peaceable man. The local administration knew nothing against him.

Jacob : He used to live near Nakhas Mahalla and was reported to have once served as a sergeant in Captain Hogan's Battalion under Government service. When the battalion was reduced in 1786 at Varanasi, he had been left here on that occasion to deposit the colours, arms and ammunition in Chunur. He had remained ever since without receiving any pay or receiving his discharge, following the profession of a silversmith and jeweller. Jacob had unfortunately broken his thigh and possessed a certificate from Dr. Balfour stating that he was thence unfit for service, although he was not a total invalid. Local reports did not however 'speak very well of his temper towards the natives'. But since the arrival of Duncan in Varanasi he had no complaint against Jacob, who also assured the Resident that he did not at all interfere in 'Country matters'.

Monsieur La Blance : A native of France and an honest, sensible and agreeable man, La Blance had been in India almost since his infancy and had settled among the English 'ever since the first capture of Pondicherry'. He was reported to have undertaken the oath of allegiance to the English Government and he was 'too well known in Calcutta to require any character (certificate) from the Resident'. La Blance obtained Governor-General Sir John Macpherson's written permission on April 2, 1786, to repair to this station for his private affairs. Here he lived near Madho Das's Garden and followed the business of a diamond merchant for which he also had received Government permission.

It was further reported that La Blance also followed, from the remains of an earlier practice, the 'profession of Physic'(?) in a limited degree, in which line sundry applications were made to him by the local people.

Quieros : With a Portuguese ancestry, he was born in a place near Pondicherry, a French settlement in India, and was educated in France. He was a son-in-law of La Blance and also obtained the Governor-General's permission to come to Varanasi on his private affairs of limited trade. He also assisted his father-in-law in his profession and lived together with his father-in-law, wife and children. Quieros was a prudent, diligent and peace loving inhabitant and was a Roman Catholic by religion.

Benjamin D. Aguilar : He was a Jew and a native of Austria who had long resided in England before his arrival in India. He lived here with one Treves in Secrole and was engaged in trade.

Thomas Scott : He resided here at Prager's house at Pishachmochan

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having come to Varanasi along with Prager.

Robinson : He was the dog keeper to the Nawab Saadat Ali. He came out from England in 1778 and served Richard Barwell, one of the members of the Bengal Council. Afterwards, he stayed at Patna and had been at Varanasi for about eight months when Duncan sent his report.

George Couchman : He used to live at Durga Kund, but his profession is unknown.

Antony : A Portuguese by birth he used to transact *Dawk* business.

John : Also a Portuguese he used to live at Durga Kund. But his profession also is unknown.

Therindal : A Portuguese by birth, he was unemployed.

It is somewhat surprising here that none of these above mentioned persons is found on the list of donors for the erection of a chapel in Secrole in 1815. This might be due to certain factors such as their leaving Varanasi or passing away by the time of the erection of the church or belonging to a different religious denomination. It might also be that none of them were approached for a donation, that they declined to donate or even that they had little or no contact with the British settlement.

Demetrius Galanos : A Greek by birth, he was a great scholar of Sanskrit. He was appointed Superintendent of the Benares Government Sanskrit College for a few years.*

Peter Federoff : A Russian by birth, his profession was trade.[44] Galanos was reported to have been his friend with whom he lived. One Peter, who was a Russian and who used to read in the Jaynarayan School in 1820, seemed to have been the son of Peter Federoff or a near relative of his.[45]

Wilkins : British by birth and a Sanskrit scholar, he lived in Varanasi to study Sanskrit in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.**

G. Wheatley : British by birth, he lived in Varanasi in the beginning of the nineteenth century and had induced Jayanarayan Ghoshal to open an English School where he taught the students English till his demise.

Colonel Wilford : Swiss by birth, he was a scholar of Sanskrit.***

T. Colebrooke : Also a Sanskrit scholar, he lived in Varanasi for some time.

Major General Cunningham : A celebrated archaeologist, he became

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* More of Galanos has been discussed in Chapters XII and XIII.

** Vide Chapter XII for details.

*** See Chapters XII and XIII for details

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the pioneer in excavating Saranath in 1835 and in discovering Buddhist relics.*

Major Markham Kittoe : A famous architect, he also supervised excavation in Saranath in 1851. Moreover, he designed and supervised the construction of the magnificent building of the Queen's College in Varanasi.

H. H. Wilson : A famous Sanskrit scholar who lived in the City for some time.

J. Muir : He lived in Varanasi and was appointed the first European Principal of the Sanskrit College of Varanasi.**

Rev. Wallis : A Sanskrit scholar who lived in Varanasi at one time.

J. R. Ballantyne : A great scholar of Sanskrit, he was appointed the Principal of Sanskrit College.***

E. J. Lazarus : A physician by profession and the proprietor of the famous Medical Hall Press of Varanasi.**** He was also one of the benefactors of the English Primary School founded in 1854, which later developed into the Bengali Tola Intermediate College.[46]

The above list, though not exhaustive for obvious reasons, corroborates the observation of European travellers to Varanasi that the number of the European civil population was insignificant in the City, possibly as a result of the Government policy of monitoring European settlement in Upper India.

The scope of informal relations between the local European civil population and Indians was, however, much greater, as such relations were free from the strains of a ruler versus ruled relationship. Again, it was in their own business interests for these Europeans to mix with the local people more closely. The European scholars of Sanskrit like the Greek Galanos and the Swiss Col. Wilford, who married a Muslim girl,[47] had cordial relations and great affinity with the people and embraced a native way of life. Wilkins, Coleridge and Wilson also had close contact with the people, especially the pandits, in connection with their scholastic pursuits and presumably established a close rapport with them.

The local people used to talk about an Englishman, name unknown, who Hindooized himself. The legend goes that this Englishman had a great desire to die at Varanasi. After his arrival, he is said to have given

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* See *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. XXXII, for details.

** See Chapters XII & XIII for details.

*** See Chapters XII & XIII for details.

**** See Chapter XIV for details.

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money to his head Hindu servant to build a temple and perform the different ceremonies required. A short time afterwards he did, indeed, realize his desire and passed away here.[48]

Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Magistrate of Varanasi had been asked by the authority, to report on the behaviour of Europeans not employed in the service of the Government with the local people, he noted that he had not heard of any case of bad treatment but rather 'the fairness of their dealings, and their quiet deportment, does them credit in the eyes of the natives'.[49] Records show at least one case of less than quiet deportment, when Duncan reported that he had heard about charges of Jacob's bad temper towards the locals. It may be that there were more examples of unfair dealings and ill-tempered treatment than were actually reported, as some of the indigo planters, who were generally notorious for their haughty temper and tyranny over Indian employees, used to live in and around Varanasi.[50] Nevertheless, the relations between the independent European population of the City and the local people were by and large good.

OTHER CASES

Let us now focus our attention on relations between Indian Christians and Europeans.[51] The population of this group was meagre, as most had been converted under the pressure of circumstances. But excepting the Christian missionaries who attended to their religious needs and the Europeans with Indian wives, these converts had almost no social intercourse with other Europeans of the station. These converts could not maintain relations with Indian society either, as they were treated as outcasts in view of their conversion. Consequently, these 'native Christians', as they were called, and their children could not mix easily in either European or Indian circles, which compelled them to form a close knit society of their own.

There were also other examples of rapport between Europeans and locals, such as the Committee for Local Improvement, formed in 1823.[52] This group had worked for the development and beautification of the City and became instrumental in establishing informal relations between the local people and its European members.[53] Unfortunately, this process could not continue longer, as the Government abolished the Committee within a few years of its establishment, in spite of the fact that it had made great strides in implementing positive change and mutual understanding.

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THE EUROPEAN CHANGE IN ATTITUDE

Pointing to the earlier respectful attitude of the Europeans towards the rich heritage of India, one Indian traveller, while writing on Varanasi in the 1860s observes :

> 'There was a period when many Europeans loved India not for the sake of its cotton, indigo or saltpetre; but as the mother-country of Sanskrit, when there existed an intense curiosity concerning the literature, the religion, and the antiquities of the subjects of their eastern dominion and when they came willing enough to repay the debt which the world owed to the genius and wisdom of the Hindoos.'[54]

This observation was also corroborated in 1851 by the *Kashivartaprakashika*, a Varanasi based fortnightly.[55] The change in the behaviour of the British in their relations with their Indian subjects is best revealed in the following writing from Bishop Heber :[56]

> 'It is however, thought that the natives do not really like us, and that if a fair opportunity be offered, the Mussulmans, more particularly, would gladly avail themselves of it to rise against us. But this is from political, not religious feeling; and it has been increased of late years by the conduct of Lord Hastings, to the old Emperor of Delhi, a conduct which has been pursued by succeeding administrations but which entirely differed from the outward respect and allegiance which the Company's officer had professed to pay him, from Lord Clive downward. The elevation of the Nawab of Oude to the kingly title and Lord Hastings' refusal to pay him the same homage which all his predecessors had courted every opportunity of doing and which even the Maharattas did not neglect when the late Shah Aullum was their prisoner, have awakened questions and scruples among the fierce Mohammedans about obeying an unbelieving nation (the English).... The behaviour of Lord Hastings was very disadvantageously contrasted in Benares, with that of Warren Hastings, who, in the height of his power and conquests, gained infinite popularity by riding publicly throughout the city, as usual with the high functionaries of the Court of Delhi, behind the *howdah* of the hereditary prince, with a fan of peacock's feathers in his hand. This, however, is a digression.'

Occasions which led to the alienation of the Indian subjects from the British were the frequent instances of humiliation at the hands of the latter. British officers, both high- and low-ranking, regarded themselves as 'infinitesimal representatives of the sovereign'[57] and expected appropriate behaviour and respect from the people. Any deviation would cause irritation and rage of those officers, which would express itself in various ways ranging from humiliation to violent reprisals. Ill feelings breed ill feelings and hatred begets hatred and Indians also reacted sharply to the misbehaviour of British officers whenever possible. In most cases, the people had to bear helplessly this ill-

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treatment of the ruling class in the absence of any means of redress, since those in a position to dispense justice were themselves members of the same imperialist class. The following is one typical example of alleged highhandedness by British officers :

An Indian attorney of the Supreme Court came to conduct a case at Varanasi from Calcutta.[58] He had been accompanied by a European barrister. One morning, the attorney was surprised to find that the *Darogah* of the City had come and placed him under arrest. The puzzled attorney could think of no offence that he had committed for which he could be charged. The Darogah also could not assign any reason for his proceedings and when asked to produce warrants he could show none. He had merely received a *hookum* (an order) to do so by his superior, and he iterated that a 'hookum is law in Mofussil'. Then dropping a line or two to his friend, the European barrister, he departed with the Darogah. It was not *cutcherry-time*, so they proceeded to the house of the officer concerned. The officer was then engaged in a game of chess after breakfast and the attorney was compelled to wait for two hours in an outer verandah. Immediately upon the arrival of the European barrister in search of his friend, however, the official made haste to come out and take a deposition from the attorney. The attorney was then told to go away, without a word of courteous explanation or apology 'for his having been brought up as a felon.'

Bholanauth Chunder, the recorder of this incident observes in this connection that 'every native in Benares has to *salaam* to a passing European.... Last year a rich Baboo from Calcutta narrowly escaped a horse whipping for failing to stop his *gharry* (horse cart) and salute an officer driving along the same road ... it is audacious in the present time to drive in a carriage and pair and omit bowing to an Englishman'.[59]

The highhandedness of haughty British officers and the people's reaction to their behavior was further corroborated by other contemporary records, including the travel account of a person no less than Bishop Heber.[60] The Bishop observes the following in this regard :

> '... I really think there are some causes of discontent among the natives which it is in our own power, and which it is our duty to remove or diminish. One of these is distance and haughtiness with which a very large proportion of the civil and military servants of the Company treat the upper and middle class of natives.... The foolish pride of the English absolutely leads them to set at naught the injunctions of their own Government. The *Tussildar* for instance, or principal native officers of revenue, ought, by an order of council, to have chairs always offered them in the presence of their European superiors, and the same, by the standing orders of the army, should

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be done to the *Soubahdars*. Yet there are hardly six collectors in India who observe the former etiquette; and the latter, which was fifteen years ago never omitted in the army, is now completely in disuse. At the same time the regulations of which I speak are known to every Tussildar and Soubahdar in India, and they feel themselves aggrieved every time these civilians are neglected; men of old families, are kept out of the former situation by this and other similar slights, and all the natives endeavour to indemnify themselves for these omissions on our part by many little pieces of rudeness, of which I have heard Europeans complain, as daily increasing among them.'

THE INDO-EUROPEAN RELATIONSHIP—MORE APPARENT THAN REAL

Thus, despite the establishing of a regular and efficient administration in Varanasi, the founding of Sanskrit College to promote indigenous study, the care taken not to hurt the religious sentiments of the people, the conferring of titles and *khelats* upon individuals, and the isolated gestures of goodwill towards Indians by some of the ruling class, the Government could not win the people over to its side in the end. Rather, they became more and more estranged in course of time. This too was observed by Heber who concluded, 'I have not been led to believe that our Government is generally popular, or advancing towards popularity'.[61] The Government's estrangement from the governed became more evident with the spontaneous eruption of violence against the authorities on a number of occasions.

Generally, instances of cordial interchange and intimacy between Indians and Europeans on all social and business levels were conspicuous in their absence. As was pointed out by James Prinsep and Bishop Heber, serious attempts should have been made by the British authorities to forge closer relationships with their Indian subjects in the interest of a sound administration. Interestingly enough, Heber offered the following novel suggestion in this regard:

> 'Against their (Indians) mixing much with us in society there are certainly many hindrances, though even their objection to eating with us might, so far as the Mussulmans are concerned, I think, be conquered by any popular man in the upper provinces, who made the attempt in a right way. But there are some of our amusements, such as private theatrical entertainments, and the sports of the field, in which they would be delighted to share and invitations to which would be regarded by them as extremely flattering'.[62]

But, finally, no serious attempts were made in this direction with the sole exception of the foundation of the Committee of Local Improvement, which, again, suffered a pre-mature death and was never revived.

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Contrarily, gestures of malevolence by the British towards the local people infinitely surpassed the gestures of goodwill. So, neither was there any close and cordial relationship between the British and the local population of the City, nor was it possible to establish such relationship as the basic character of the British Government was colonial and thrived on the exploitation of its Indian subjects. The British, in general, suffered from a superiority complex also, as discussed above. Heber's comment is worth considering in this regard when he says, 'It is perhaps impossible that we should be (popular) to any great degree'.

It was recorded by some travellers, though contradicted by others,[63] that they had found an amiable relation between the two in Varanasi,[64] but on closer examination one discovers that this was more apparent than real, more simple contact than a relationship, one that could be severed at any moment with hardly any pangs of separation.

In regard to the impact of this relation there was, however, one positive aspect which must be admitted and given proper recognition. Their contact on various levels and in various fields paved the way for mutual give and take. The people here learnt many things from the West through local Europeans in the fields of learning, organization, administration, and so on, while some Europeans also developed certain Eastern habits regarding food, drink and dress and a few among them cultivated Sanskrit learning. A few Europeans of this place, as pointed out earlier, even went so far as to embrace the local way of life and were so much influenced by the ideas and practices of Hindus that they were regarded as having converted to Hinduism.[65] About them, Malachowski, the Polish traveller, writes :

> '...even Europeans loathe to eat meat of hogs and bulls, so that they may reach the paradise of Great Brahma if they die within the walls of the holiest City of lotus and if they are charitable to Brahmins'.[66]

Nevertheless, the impact of the Europeans on the local people was far deeper than the impact of the local people on the Europeans, cases of the latter being only occasional and on a personal level.

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CHAPTER XVIII

NOTABLE PERSONALITIES

THE RAIS

A galaxy of eminent personalities either visited or made Varanasi their home or were born here during the period under review and various pieces of information about several of these individuals have been provided in other chapters. In the present chapter we shall consider those people of power, position and/or opulence. With regard to their respectable family backgrounds, wealth, munificence, learning, interest in art and music, and above all, sense of dignity, some were elevated to the special status of *rais* by the local society and were looked upon with an eye of admiration. In cases where insufficient data were available, only the name and station of the individual have been given.

LOCAL ARISTOCRATS

First, we shall take up local aristocrats, including the Maharajas of Varanasi and their relatives, the pinnacle of aristocratic society.

The Maharajas of Varanasi and their relatives

As we have recorded in the introductory chapter, upon Chet Singh's dethronement, his nephew and the grandson of Raja Balwant Singh, Mahipnarain Singh, was appointed king, though much of the power of the Raj, including his jurisdiction over the City, was taken away from him by the British Imperialists. Thus, though the *Kashi Naresh* lost administrative control over the City, he still commanded the love and respect of the people of Varanasi. Relations between the Raja and the people, free from the stresses and strains of rule, were marked by mutual love and respect. The Kashi Naresh was looked upon as the chief patron of religion and culture of Varanasi and even regarded as the visible form of Lord Shiva, the presiding deity of the City. The three Rajas who succeeded to the throne during our period were Mahipnarain (1781-1795), Uditnarain (1795-1835), and Ishwarinarain (1835-1889). Among these, Ishwarinarain's role as patron of Banarasi culture was most spectacular and long-standing.[1]

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This becomes apparent from various accounts of his deep religious faith, regal character, personal gifts, liberal patronization of art and culture, and, at the same time, of his independent spirit. One contemporary, Reverend Sherring, writes that he was 'a person of much amiability and geniality of disposition who by reason of these excellent qualities, and also of the high station he occupies, commands the respect of all classes'.[2] Ishwarinarain exerted great influence over a period of more than five decades and small icons of him were reported to have been purchased during fairs for decorating local homes.[3]

The Rajas lavishly patronized talented men in various fields bringing out monumental works like the translation of the *Mahabharata*,[4] and by making elaborate festival arrangements on the occasion of the *Ramlila*.[5] The Rajas also undertook works of public service and performed acts of benevolence on various occasions. For example, in 1783, Raja Mahipnarain donated Rs.1000 for the poor inhabitants of Madras.[6] Again, in December 1821, Raja Uditnarain donated Rs.1000 to the Benares Government College.[7] Raja Ishwarinarain was one of the benefactors of the Bengali Tola Primary English School established in 1854, which later became the Bengali Tola Intermediate College in 1952.[8]

In addition to Ramnagar, where the Rajas maintained the formal palace and fort, they had a number of palaces in different quarters of the City, such as Nadeshwar, Kamachchha, Shivala, Raja Darwaja, etc. The Raja would live with a large number of relatives and attendants[9] at one or the other of these palaces and although he lived at Ramnagar most of the time, he would be sure to pass his final days in Varanasi proper.

The relation between the Raja and the British Government

After the enthronement of Mahipnarain by the British, the Raja took special care to cultivate good relations with the Government and would attend *durbars,* or formal receptions, held on the occasion of visits by British dignitaries. The Raja offered warm hospitality to European guests at Ramnagar[10] and also became a member of the Committee promoting a patriotic fund created in 1855[11] on the occasion of Crimean War. He made interest free loans to the Government a number of times and also took the side of the Government whenever it fell into trouble,[12] e.g., during the insurgency of Wazir Ali in 1799, the Hindu Muslim Riot in 1809, etc. Cognizant of the great influence the Raja held over the City, the Government utilized his services in suppressing disturbances. Such

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services were acknowledged by the Government with letters of gratitude and thanks or by granting a *khelat*. For instance, Raja Uditnarain was granted a khelat in 1797.[13] Nevertheless, there were occasions when the Government would become suspicious of the Raja, as in 1852, during the agitation over the mess in the City jail.[14] The local Government suspected that the Raja had secret links with the agitators, but in absence of any definite proof, the Government, though offended, could not proceed further against him on this issue.

What is noteworthy in this relationship is that the gestures shown by the British in return for the Raja's services were more superficial than real and if need be the British would not hesitate to consolidate and extend their Indian empire at the cost of native chiefs like the Kashi Naresh. Thus, though on certain occasions the Raja remonstrated against the Government's attitude towards him, he had no other alternative but to request the British Government to redress his grievances, since the very survival and continuity of his lineage depended entirely on the latter's mercy.[15]

On one such occasion, Regulation 7 of 1828 was enacted to define the relationship between the Government and the Raja, as alluded to in Chapter I. A letter written by Uditnarain to Governor-General Lord Bentinck in March 1833 requesting the repeal of the Regulation bears testimony to the various services rendered by the Raja to the British Government on different occasions from 1781 to 1833. Portions of the letter follow :

> 'First, that the district of Benares was the property of your petitioner's ancestors, and was acknowledged as such by the *Sunnuds* of the former and the present Government and your petitioner's father presented the said district as "nuzzur" to the British Government, though the revenue derivable from it was very great and himself relinquished every source of profit.
>
> Secondly, that in the letter of Council to the address of Mr. Jonathan Duncan the Resident, dated the 19th September, 1794, it is stated, that the regulations relating to the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, could not be extended to the province of Benares, without the consent of your petitioner's father, but he with the view of benefiting his progeny as well as serving the Government, abided by all the Regulations, with exception indeed to the *purgunnahs* of Budoohee, Gungapoor and Kurumungrour(?), in which estates after relinquishing immense profits, he contended himself with a small income.
>
> Thirdly, that in the year 1794, your petitioner, borrowed on a heavy interest from *Mahajans*, the sum of ten lakhs of rupees, and lent same to the Hon'ble Company, which amount was not refunded to him until the month of September

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1801 and your petitioner never made any demand for the interest due thereon, in order that he may continue to enjoy the favour of Government.

Fourthly, that in the year 1804 your petitioner's father lent Government the sum of three lakhs of rupees for the purpose of discharging the arrears of salary, which were due to the troops and which is also well known.

Fifthly, that during the rebellion of Wazir Ali Knan, your petitioner with all his followers and troops, placed himself under the then commanding officer of the station and appointed Baboo Surrubjeet Singh (a relation of his) chief of his own forces and determined, with head and heart, to join in expelling the rebels and continued with the British forces for that purpose, and also joined in devising expedience for quashing the rebels.

Sixthly, that when in the year 1809, a most serious affray happened within the city of Benares, between the Hindoo and Mohammedan inhabitants, your petitioner hastened in conformity with the order of the Agent to the Governor-General and of the Magistrate to suppress the raging tumult which he was fortunate enough to accomplish and received in consequence a letter from Government of thanks and praise.

Seventhly, that in the year 1812 when the Pindaris invaded this country, your petitioner likewise according to the injunctions of the Estate, engaged at a great expense *Sawars* and *Barkundazes* and stationed them for two successive years at the *ghautees* (stations) of Sonegurra and Hulleea for the protection of the territories, and he never anticipated a compensation for such services beyond the favour of Government.

Eighthly, that in the year 1812, when taxes were ordered to be levied on the houses within the city of Benares, the inhabitants being unwilling to meet such a demand quitted their homes and encamped outside the city, and the cultivator, etc., relinquished their occupations to the great injury of the public revenue, your petitioner, with the sole view of serving Government, pacified the people and suppressed the rising insurrection.

Ninthly, that during the life time of your petitioner he never neglected paying due obedience to the injunctions of the Government, which is too well known to Mr. William Augusts Brooks, Agent to the Governor-General, who is an old resident of this station.

But your petitioner has been so very unfortunate of late that although he has done as much as he possibly could for the welfare of Government, yet he has suffered many heavy grievances in consequences of their having withdrawn their favour from him and having done things contrary to all their former promises. Therefore, all their claims have been ruined. Moreover, the Government neither render him justice, nor hold good the engagements they had made with him. Under such cirmumstances, your petitioner begs leave respectfully to lay the under mentioned circumstances of the grievances for your Lordship's considerations....

The Government having themselves established as an undeviating rule that pledges and promises, etc., should be observed without violation, it is incumbent, therefore, that they should themselves observe it in a greater degree. But the agreement entered into by Mr. Jonathan Duncan, on the part of Government with

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your petitioner's father has been altogether violated by the enactment of Regulation 7, 1828, to the great injury of his dignity....'[16]

Ever willing to sacrifice all equity and justice in its unscrupulous pursuit of imperialism, the Government only issued an order to intimate the *mukteer* of the Raja that the Raja's prayer could not be complied with.[17]

Valentia visits the Ramnagar Palace

Important visitors from Europe would visit the City and on such occasions at least some of them also visited the Raja. Lord Valentia paid a visit to the Ramnagar palace around 1800.[18] He leaves an account which gives us glimpses of the fort palace and how guests were received and entertained by the Raja. Below are some portions of his account :

'At six the next morning, accompanied by Mr. Neave and Mr. Salt, I proceeded to Ramnagar to visit the Rajah of Benares.... The castle is situated on the opposite side of the river, to cross which we made use of one of the Raja's boats that was in attendance, sending our horses back to Secrole.... A small town joins the fort of Ramnagar, consisting of two streets crossing each other, of a very good width and uniform architecture.... At the extremity of the largest (front) is the gate of the castle, through which we entered into a court, where are kept the horses, cows, elephants, etc. The palace forms one side of a second court. It is neat, and white washed, with the wood work, painted green. At the door I was met by our young conductor, who led me upstairs, where I was received by the Rajah (Uditnarain) who presented me with a large *nazur* of gold mohurs, which I touched, afterwards raising my hand to my head, but declined taking. I embraced him three times, and was led by him to the chief seat in his *Dewan Khanah.* I here found assembled all his courts, and about fifty nautch girls of every age and description.... The Dewan Khanah was small; his garden-house would have made a better, and there, indeed, I should have been received, had not his illness prevented his moving so far. The room was white; the ornaments painted with green; lustres of the same colour were ranged down the middle, and on brackets at the sides. In compartments were English prints framed and glazed. We conversed but little, our attention being diverted by the *nautching.* Some of the Persian airs were pretty, and I was much amused with their singing, "I care for no body, no not I" and "Malbrook".'

Emily Eden's visit[19]

Emily Eden, being accompanied by Lord William Godolphin Osborne visited the Ramnagar palace around 1837. What is striking about her account is that while Valentia in spite of his respectable background could not enter into the harem of the Raja because of the *purdah*, Eden, being a woman, was brought to the harem and introduced to the queen and other respectable women there. Thus the account of Eden which was also more

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elaborate than that of Valentia gives us the following rare picture of the harem :

'This Raja of Benares asked us to come to his country house, called Ramnagar....

The Raja met us at the ghaut and we were all carried off to the elephants, and got on them to go and see his garden, though it was nearly dark. But the first sight was very striking.

Eighteen elephants and crowds of attendants, and then crowds as far as we could see of natives going on (repeating), Wah ! Hi Lord Sahib ! We rode about, till it was quite dark, and then the Rajah proposed we should return; and when we came to the turn of the road the whole of the village and his castle, which is an enormous building, was illuminated. Wherever there was a straight line, or a window, or an arch, there was a row of little bright lamps, every cross of the lattices in every window had its little lamp. It was the *largest* illumination I ever saw....

The Rajah put us on a velvet sofa, with a gold gauze carpet before it. He sat on one side of us and his father on the other, and Mr. B. and Mr. C. on each side to interpret, and then the aides-de-camp and the other ladies; and then the nautch girls began dancing. He (the Rajah) had provided an immense troops of them, and they were covered with jewels and dressed in gold brocades, some purple and some red, with long floating scarfs or gold gauze. Most of them ugly, but one was I think the prettiest creature I ever saw and the most graceful. If I have time I will send a little coloured sketch of her, just to show the effect of her dress. She and another girl danced slowly round with their full draperies floating round them, without stopping, for quarter of an hour, during all which time they were making flowers out of same coloured scarfs they wore, and when they had finished a bunch they came and presented it to us with such graceful Eastern genuflexions. The whole thing was like a dream, it was so curious and unnatural.

Then the Ranee (the Queen) sent for us, and F. and I set off in *tonjauns* for the women's apartments, with the ladies who were with us. They carried us through a great many courts, and then the Rajah gave me his cold, flabby little hand, and handed us up some narrow, dirty stairs, and came in with us behind the *purdah* and introduced us to the Ranee, his mother, who was very splendidly dressed, and to some of his sisters, who were ugly. Then they asked us to go and see an old grandmother, and the Ranee laid hold of my hand, and one of the sisters too, F., and they led us along an immense court of the roof, to the old lady....

There was another immense nautch provided, which we had not time to look at. We gave our rings, and they brought the trays of presents which were casually given, a diamond ring and drops for earrings, two necklaces (very trashy), some beautiful shawls and kincobs, and some muslin; then they put immense skipping-ropes of silver braid bigger than a common boa, round our necks and small ones on the other ladies, and then poured attar of roses on our hands, and we left the old lady.

When we came back to the Ranee's room, she showed us her little *chapel* close to her sofa, where there were quantities of horrid-looking idols—Vishnu, and so on.

Several native girls were introduced to us, but only one who was pretty ... has just been betrothed to the father of the Raja. The young Ranees, or whatever they

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are called, were very shy, and stood with their eyes closed, but the older ones had great fun when we were going away in pouring the attar over our gowns, and utterly spoiled mine, which was silk....

(After some time) we went to the illumination, which was done on a very large scale, but not so neatly as at home; then to the boat, where the Rajah accompanied us, and there was a second illumination on the river, much more beautiful than the first and the blue lights, and the crowds, and the great pile of buildings made a great show.'

Rani Golab Koor : Widow of Raja Balwant Singh and one of the signatories[20] to the certificate sent to Warren Hastings on the occasion of his impeachment by the British Parliament.

Shivaprasanna Singh, Baboo : Brother-in-law of Raja Chet Singh. He corresponded with the British Government a number of times for returning and settling the widow and son of Raja Chet Singh in Varanasi, but without success.[21]

Bhupnarain Singh, Baboo : Brother of Raja Mahipnarain Singh. He was *amil* of Pargana Ahroura;[22] and certified Hastings.[23]

Ausan Singh, Baboo : Deputy to Raja Balwant Singh and Chet Singh, he was awarded *khelat* by the British.[24] He also certified Hastings.[25] He received vast *jageers* and Deby Prasad and Baboo Rup Singh, two of his important subordinates, were charged with looking after them. Baboo Ghunsyam Singh was his *naeb*.[26]

Maniar Singh, Baboo :[27] Son of Meherban Singh, Balwant Singh adopted him and regarded him as heir apparent. After Balwant Singh's passing away, however Chet Singh ousted Maniar Singh, himself becoming king. Afraid of Chet Singh, Maniar Singh fled to Nepal in fear of his life. Maniar Singh was the author of a number of Hindi works.*

Pertab Singh, Baboo : Son of Baboo Maniar Singh and nephew of Raja Balwant Singh, he was also an *amil*[28] and certified Hastings.[29]

Ansuman Singh, Baboo : Son of Baboo Maniar Singh and nephew of Raja Balwant Singh, he certified Hastings.[30]

Jagat Singh, Baboo : Son of Shivlal Singh, the brother of Raja Balwant Singh[31] and the *dewan* of Raja Chet Singh. Later on he was appointed *amil.*[32] He certified Hastings.[33] He founded a ward called Jagat Ganj in the suburb of Varanasi and carted away bricks from the ruins of the Buddhist Stupas at Sarnath for its construction. Major General

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* See Chapter XII for details.

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Cunningham who had conducted excavation in Sarnath records the following in this connection :

> '...the ruin of large Brick Stupa (or tower)... was excavated by Jagat Singh ... for the purpose of obtaining bricks for the erection of Jagatganj. In January 1794 his workmen found at a depth of twenty feet, two vessels of stone and marble—one inside in the other.[34] One of these boxes contained jewels (about 40-46 pearls, 14 rubies, 8 silver, and 9 gold earrings) and the box was deposited with Jonathan Duncan, the Resident.'[35]

The spoliation of this site by Jagat Singh was rightly regarded by Reverend Sherring as an act of vandalism[36] from the point of archaeological importance of the stupa. The local British authorities were also guilty of committing the same offense when it had utilized Sarnath remnants for the construction of the Burna Bridge.[37]

Jagat Singh was found to be involved in the rise of Wazir Ali Khan in Varanasi against the British in 1799* for which he was deported to the Andamans. On the way to the Andamans he committed suicide by taking poison.[38]

Sarnam Singh, Baboo : A relative of Raja Balwant Singh, he certified Warren Hastings.[39]

Samboo Ratan Singh, Baboo : A relative of Raja Balwant Singh. He was an *amil*[40] and he certified Hastings.[41]

Sankar Ratan Singh, Baboo : A relative of Raja Balwant Singh and brother of Baboo Samboo Ratan Singh. He certified Hastings.[42]

Lala Sadanand : The *bakshy* and *dewan* of Raja Chet Singh, he also certified Hastings.[43] He constructed a ghat[44] and also set up a bazar[45] which were named after him.

Ajaib Singh, Baboo : He was appointed the *naeb* of the Kashi Naresh in place of Jagatdev Singh and continued in this post till his death in 1787.

Seopurran Singh, Baboo : Son of Baboo Ajaib Singh and deputy of Raja Mahipnarain Singh. He certified Hastings.[47]

Daljeet Singh, Baboo : Son-in-law of Baboo Ajaib Singh and an *amil.*[48] He certified Hastings.[49] His *gomasta* was Ramdut Singh.

Daleep Singh, Baboo : Superintendent of the affairs of Raja Mahipnarain Singh. He certified Hastings.[50]

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* See Chapter XX for details.

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Lalla Gur Buksh : The *bakshy* of Raja Mahipnarain Singh. He certified Hastings.[51]

Gajraj Singh : The *gomasta* of Rani Golab Koor.[52]

Prasiddhanarain Singh, Baboo : He belonged to the family of Kashi Naresh and was a member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1834.[53]

OTHER LOCAL NOTABLES / ARISTOCRATS

Arat Ram Tewary : He was the *gomasta* of Arjunjee Nathajee Trivedi, the famous shroff of Surat, in Varanasi.[54]

Raja Ambashankar : Appointed the Mint Master of Benares,[55] he was removed on charges of debarring gold coins, but was reappointed to his post later on.[56] He also certified Hastings in 1788.[57]

Maulavi Amrulla : One of the City judges of Varanasi.[58]

Nasiruddin Khan : Also a City judge.

Akbar Ali Khan, Sayyid : He was awarded *khelat* from the Government for exerting influence on other chiefs to restore normalcy during the House Tax movement in Varanasi in 1810.[59]

Abdul Kadir Khan : Same as above.

Ashikulla Khan : The Accountant of Varanasi, he also certified Hastings.[60]

Ajit Singh : The *naeb* of Kashi Naresh.[61]

Bahadur Singh : The Customs Master of Varanasi.[62]

Bhawany Persad : The *naeb* of the Treasurer of Varanasi.[63]

Bhawany Das Sahu : The brother of Gopal Das Sahu, a famous shroff, he built a *dharmashala* in the City in 1798.

Brindaban Das, Baboo : He donated Rs.100 to the Benares Government College on December 22, 1821.[64]

Bariar Singh : He had a garden, which was named after him.[65]

Champat Ray, Lalla : The *amil* of Varanasi, he also certified Warren Hastings in 1788.

Deokinandan Singh, Baboo : An *amil*[66] and a man of considerable property and opulence,[67] he was the builder of a large mansion, well known as 'Deokinandan ki Haveli' (see Chapter II). He passed away on July 17, 1815, at which time his wife became *sati*. His mistress, though

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willing, was not allowed to become a *sati* as she was not his legal wife.[68]

Deonarain Singh, Raja : One among those who enjoyed a high position in the City during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. People also had high regard for him. He was suspected to have some involvement in the Mess Movement in 1852 by the then British Magistrate.[69] Nevertheless, he had a close relation with the Government which had awarded him the title of K.C.S.I.[70] Reverend Sherring, the historian of Varanasi and a contemporary. remarked that he 'has won golden opinions both from the English and native community for the zeal he has displayed in promoting many useful projects of social and national interest'.[71] He was one of the members of the Patriotic Fund Committee,[72] and also the sub-committee for the Paris Exhibition in the 1850s.[73] He became the president of the Benares Institute[74] and was also appointed a member of the Indian council.[75] The entrance verandah of the Government Sanskrit College was gifted by him in 1849.[76]

Daalchand, Raja : He was related to Jagat Seth,[77] a celebrated banker of Murshidabad of Bengal and one of the main conspirators against the Bengal Nawab Siraj-ud-daula. Raja Daalchand was the leader of the local Oswals, the Jains.[78] The present Dal ki Mandi market near the Chowk was most probably established by and named after him.[79] He certified Warren Hastings.[80]

Enaet Ali, Sheikh : He also certified Hastings, but further details are not known.[81]

Fatehnarain Singh, Baboo : One of the most celebrated persons of the City during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, together with Raja Deonarain Singh, he was also suspected of involvement in the Mess Agitation of 1852.[82] Fatehnarain, too, was a member of the Patriotic Fund Committee already referred to.[83] He became the Vice President of the Benares Institute and it was at his house that the meetings of the Institute were regularly held.[84] He was described as popular and kind-hearted by Reverened Sherring.[85]

Fyazuddin Bahadur, Mirza : Most probably a resident of the City and one of the members of the Committee in Aid of the Patriotic Fund.[86]

Ghanasyam Das, Baboo : He donated Rs.100 to the Benares Government College on December 22, 1821.[87]

Govindram, Maharaj Bahadur, Seopadar Jung : *Vakeel* of the

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Vizeer of Ouch and most probably resided in the City. He also certified Hastings.

Gopal Das Sahu and Gowal Das Sahu : These two were famous bankers of Varanasi.*

Harshachandra, Baboo : He was the descendant of Omichand, a rich merchant of eighteenth century Calcutta. He was one of the chief organizers and patrons of the *Buḍhwamangal* and *Chitrakut Ramlila*. He took the main initiative in bringing the deity of Mukunda Rai from Nathdwara in a big procession and installing it in the famous Gopal Mandir of Chowkhamba.[88]

Gopalchandra, Baboo : He was the son of Baboo Harshachandra and father of Bharatendu Harishchandra. He authored many Hindi works including a drama entitled *Nahush Natak*.[89]

Haliram Dhekiyal Phukan : A celebrated person from Assam, he published a book entitled *Assam Buranji* there. In the last years of his life he migrated to Varanasi and distinguished himself with various acts of munificence.[90] He passed away there in July, 1832.

Haidar Ali Khan : He was one of the sons of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, the first Indian Magistrate of the City under the British.[91]

Jankiprasad, Baboo : He donated Rs.100 to the Benares Government College in December 1821.[92]

Jamna Das, Baboo : He was awarded a *khelat* by the Government for helping to restore normalcy in the City during the House Tax Movement of 1810.

Jhakkar Sahu : For his eccentric behaviour, he was known by this name which means eccentric. He was a descendent of Manohar Das Sahu, the famous merchant of Varanasi and second son of Gopal Das. The hearsay goes that he lost his entire fortune due to his pranks and left Varanasi for Calcutta, where he became a coachman to maintain himself. When Maharaja Ishwarinarain found him there, he rehabilitated him in Varanasi.[93]

Jayprakash Singh : He was an aristocrat of the City around the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[94]

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* See Chapter IX for more details on these two.

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Kaur Das : He was the *mufti* of Varanasi in 1788. He also certified Warren Hastings.

Muhammad Kasim Beg Khan, Bahadur : An *amil* of Varanasi, he certified Warren Hastings.[95]

Kumar Singh, Baboo : He was a *rais* of the City during the 1830s. He was present during the durbar for the Governor-General held in Varanasi in 1837.[96]

Kashmiri Mall : A famous controversial shroff during the last quarter of the eighteenth century;[97] a garden and a market-place set up by him were named after him.[98] He possibly renovated the famous Manikarnika burning ghat.[99]

Kavindranarayan Singh : The successor to Raja Jagat Singh,[100] he was also a *rais*.

Khusroo Jallal Bahadur, Mirza : A *rais* of the City during the second quarters of the nineteenth century, he was one of the members of the Patriotic Fund Committee.[101]

Lachhman Rao : A Maratha noble, he along with his brother, Luckaram, visited the City in April, 1797 where they were duly received and given presents of *kincaubs*, etc., by the local Government.[102]

Munnolal : He was appointed the Mint Master of Varanasi in place of Ambashankar in June 1785 when the latter was temporarily suspended.[103]

Mirza Panchoo : He was *Kotwal* of the City in and around 1797-98.[104]

Mehendy Ali Khan : One of the sons of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, the first Indian Magistrate of the City under the British.[105]

Mehendy Ali Khan : The Customs Master at Ghazipur in 1789 and most probably a resident of Varanasi,[106] it was he who had brought allegations against Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, and Abdur Rashid, a *munsiff* of the Benares Court.[107] His son Muhammad Hussein Khan was also an *amil*.[108]

Muttyram : The Customs Master of Jaunpur and most probably a resident of Varanasi.[109]

Mukund Lal, Baboo : The Treasurer of Benares in or around 1789,[110] he may be identical with a person of the same name who donated Rs.200 to Benares Government College on December 22, 1821.[111]

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Madho Das, Samia : Warren Hastings took shelter in his garden on August 25, 1781 before his annexation of the City.[112] Later on, in 1798, Wazir Ali Shah, the deposed Nawab of Oudh, and his retinue were accommodated here for some time.[113]

Mir Ali : Deputy of Taqi Ali Khan, the *kazi* of Varanasi, he also certified Hastings.[114]

Madholal, Raja : One of the most important persons of Varanasi during his time, he was one of the benefactors of the English Primary School founded in 1854 in Bengali Tola.[115]

Nek (Naek) Singh : An *amil* in 1789[116] and most probably a resident of the City, he might be identical with a person of the same name who contributed Rs.26 to the Benares Government College on December 21, 1822.[117]

Neejabut (Niabut) Ali : The Customs Master at Mirzapur in 1789[118] and most probably a resident of Varanasi.

Nasiruddin Ali Khan : One of the sons of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, and himself a judge of the City Court,[119] he also certified Warren Hastings.[120]

Narayan Nayek Pitdi, Baboo : Possibly a Maharashtrian, he donated Rs.200 to the Benares Government College on December 21, 1822[121] and must have been a resident of the City.

Narayan Chandra Das, Baboo : One of the members of the sub-committee formed for the Paris Exhibition around 1855.[122]

Patni Mall, Raja : A descendant of the Mughal Court, Diwan of Bihar Suba, he was a well-known figure of the City during the first part of nineteenth century. He had renounced his ancestral property in Patna and earned a great fortune through diplomatic services on behalf of the British government and the banking business. He spent lavishly in undertaking benevolent works, not only in Varanasi, but in many places, including Mathura, Vrindaban, Jwala, Kurukshetra, Patiala, Haridwar, Kalkaji, and Gaya, the details of which were published in a Bengali newspaper on January 11, 1832.[123] Thus, he was one of the few of Banarasis who undertook works of benevolence both here and outside the City. One of his most remarkable public works was his construction of a stone bridge over the Karmanasha River near Naubatpur on the Varanasi-Calcutta route

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which formed a very important link between these two important cities. The old bridge over the Karmanasha by Nana Fadnavis,[124] made of ropes, had collapsed[125] when Patni Mall took up the work of construction. Though the cost was huge and his relatives tried to dissuade him, nothing could deter Patni Mall from getting the work done and the bridge was declared open to the public in July, 1831.[126] For all these acts of munificence, the Government awarded him title of Raja,[127] and the Mughal Emperor Akbar II gave him *panch hazari mansabdari* and *do hazari zot* beside his family title of *Rai.*

Ramchand, Baboo : One of the famous shroffs of the City, he was perhaps identical with a person of the same name who donated Rs.100 to the Benares Government College on December 21, 1822.[128]

Rahmutulla Khan : Superintendent of the Court in Varanasi, he also certified Hastings.[129]

Surbjeet Singh, Baboo : He was awarded *khelat* by the Government in March, 1797[130] and was most probably a resident of the City.

Sooklal, Lalla : One of the famous businessmen of the City towards the end of the eighteenth century,[131] Sooklal was awarded *khelat* in March of 1797.[132] Perhaps the Suklal Sahu ka Phatak mahalla, which still exists, was named after him.[133]

Shankar Pandit : He was appointed the *naeb* of Varanasi on April 16, 1787, after the passing away of Ajaab Singh.[134] Shankar Pandit donated Rs.50 as subscription for the cause of the poor inhabitants of Madras.[135] A garden and a locality called Bag Shankar Pandit were named after him.[136]

Shookoor Ullah, Sheikh : The *Sheristadar* of the *Moonsheekhana* of Varanasi around 1789, he must have been a resident of the City.[137]

Shahab Khan Nyazi : The son of Lal Khan, a man of consequence under Raja Balwant Singh,[138] he certified Warren Hastings.[139]

Shivnarain Singh, Baboo : One of the important personages of the City, he was looked upon with great respect by the people. It was Shivnarain, who along with the Maharaja of Varanasi and two other chiefs, was said to have helped the Government in restoring normalcy during the House Tax Movement of 1810. In recognition of this service, he was awarded a *khelat* by the Government.[140] When Lord Hastings visited the City and held durbar on September 1, 1814, Shivnarain was honoured by

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the Governor-General.[141] He donated Rs.500 to the Benares Government College on December 21, 1822.[142]

Shivnath Singh : A leader of the *bravados* of the City, he became famous for showing gallantry on the occasion of the rise of Wazir Ali Shah against the Government in 1799 and was killed in a bloody encounter with the British.[143] Shivnath Singh ka Chouri at Brahmanal has been named after him.

Raja Shivaprasad, Sitar-e-Hind : A Jain and descendant of Raja Daalchand,* he belonged to the new elite class emerged in the nineteenth century Varanasi.

Rangil Das : Perhaps he was related to Gowal Das Sahu, the famous shroff of Varanasi. A mahalla with the name of Phatak Rangil Das Mahalla was called after a *phatak* bearing his name.[144] Many famous shroffs used to live in that mahalla.

Radhakrishna, Baboo : A resident of the City, he donated Rs.200 to the Benares Government College on December 21, 1822.[145]

Taqi Ali Khan, Kazi : The Kazi of Varanasi, who certified Warren Hastings.[146]

Udit Prakash Singha : One of the dignitaries of the City, he was present at the durbar held on November 8, 1837 on the occasion of Lord William Godolphin Osborne's visit.[147]

Uskir Ali Khan : One of the sons of Nawab Ali Ibrahim.[148]

Nawab Iqbaluddaula : He was a son of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan and he became famous for his collection of costly jewels.[149]

Villayet Ali Khan : A nephew of Taqi Ali Khan, the *kazi* of Varanasi, he certified Warren Hastings.[150]

Wassil Ali Khan, Moulavy : A *kazi,* he also certified Warren Hastings.[151]

Babua Pandey : A prominent citizen of possibly nineteenth century Varanasi. He was proficient in music, and wrestling.[152]

It is evident from this descriptive list of local aristocrats that there were a good number of Bhumihars and Agarwals among them. Bhumihars, originally Brahmins but placed in caste hierarchy between Brahmins and

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* For details, see Chapter XII and XIII.

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Rajputs, later on the Agarwals, who were Vaishyas, rose to prominence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

DEPORTED CHIEFS

Many political chiefs and/or their successors, usually with a large retinue, were accommodated in Varanasi during the period under review. They had either taken political refuge with the British or they had been deported here by British Government. Now, why Varanasi was selected as both an abode of exile and refuge is an important question to be considered. Most of these chiefs presumably desired to pass their last days in a holy city like Varanasi, which was also famous for its affluent and colourful life, but more importantly, being Hindus, most were probably motivated by the popular faith in this City's power to grant liberation. The Government must have thought it advantageous to keep these chiefs under surveillance in one place, and though it also involved the risk of collaborations against the Government, the British Cantonment at the outskirts of the City stood as a safeguard against any possible uprising. Above all, the Government kept strict vigilance over these chiefs and appointed high ranking military officers to oversee them. A Major D. Carpenter, for example, was appointed the Superintendent of the ex-Rajas of Satara, Coorg and Bharatpur in Varanasi in 1842.[153]

Most of these chiefs, however, preferred to confine themselves within the boundaries of their residences along with large numbers of attendants. They maintained amiable relations with the local authority and attended official functions. They also visited distinguished foreign guests, rather than visit counterparts within the City, which was possibly discouraged by the Government also. Nevertheless, with settlement of many deported chiefs here, a number of garden-houses sprang up in the City which contributed to the expansion of the City into the suburbs.

The presence of these exiled chiefs in the City did not always go smoothly for the Government. For example, when Wazir Ali Shah, the deported chief of Oudh, along with other local deported chiefs, also hatched a conspiracy against the Government at this time, he revolted upon being ordered to move on to Calcutta.* As a consequence, the authorities became more vigilant and strict in dealing with such chiefs.

Some details regarding the condition or circumstance of these deported chiefs are provided below.

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* See Chapter XX for further details.

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Jahandar Shah II, or Jawan Bakht, and his family

Jahandar Shah II, the eldest son of Shah Alam II, could not survive in the Mughal court of Delhi because of the increased power of the nobility there. On a number of occasions he visited Varanasi and Oudh and seeking to revive his influence in Delhi with the help of the British, but frustrated in his efforts, he decided to settle in Lucknow. Then, because of a misunderstanding with the Nawab of Lucknow, he changed his plans and finally settled in Varanasi retiring from active politics. He came to the City around 1785, but was not quite happy here sending a complaint to the Governor-General against Raja Mahipnarain of Varanasi which has been summarized below :

Jahandar Shah had settled at Varanasi two years before according to the wishes of Hastings and, as a matter of fact, the Raja treated him very kindly. But later on the Raja neglected him and had forbidden his servants to attend him. Although the Raja had received his (Prince's) allowance from the Government yet he had not paid it to him. At the time when Lala Kashmiri Mall held the office of Treasurer to the Raja, he transferred a *jageer* worth one lakh of rupees to his sons and embezzled lots of money. Yet the Raja did not check him at all. Though James Grant, Resident at Benares, was liked by the subjects and inhabitants of the City, the Raja was intriguing against him. Hence the Prince urged the Governor-General to improve the management of the City, to check all the mal-administration and not to trust the then Raja.[154]

Cornwallis, the Governor-General, paid a visit to the Mughal Prince along with local British dignitaries on the second day of his four-day visit to Varanasi in September 1793, whereupon they exchanged presents. The next day the Prince also paid a reciprocal visit to Cornwallis and had a long talk with him. It was reported that during this meeting the Prince had requested Cornwallis to cede possession of the fort of Akbarabad to him as per the assurances given by Warren Hastings, the former Governor-General. Cornwallis declined pleading that he could not make such a commitment without specific orders from a higher authority in England.

A few years after arriving in Varanasi with his family and attendants, he breathed his last on June 1, 1788,[155] at which time the Governor-General asked the British Resident to pay every due attention and respect to the family of the deceased Prince. At the same time, the Government reduced the monthly allowance to the family from Rs.25,000 to Rs.17,000

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per month.[156] However, Rs.300 per month was provided to one of the Begums for keeping the lamp burning at the tomb of her deceased husband.

Jahandar Shah left behind his widowed Begums and sons.[157] The eldest son and direct descendant and heir to the Mughal throne, Shegofta Bakht, had that title cut on his seal and he received an allowance of Rs.4,000 per month. The second son, Mirza Khorum, was born to Qutlaq Sultan Begum. As the Begum herself belonged to the royal house of Timur, she was more respected by the British and was given the allowance of Rs.11,000 per month. On a number of occasions, *Bukree Id*[158] for example, the local authority also sent presents to Qutlaq Begum and Khorum Bakht.

Jahandar's third son, Mirza Ali Kadir, was born to Jahanabadee Begum. A former dancing girl,[159] she was deemed inferior in rank to Begum Qutlaq and only got an allowance of Rs.2,000 per month for her son and herself.[160]

Qutlaq Begum and her son, Khorum Bakht, lived in the Shivala Fort[161] where the household numbered some 1000 with attendants.[162] Sometimes British dignitaries would visit them and on one such occasion Lord Valentia visited this royal family along with Neave, the Magistrate, in early 1800. Valentia leaves the following account of his visit in which he records the following deplorable conditions of the family :

> 'Sums (granted as allowances) are amply sufficient to maintain them in a country where the necessaries of life are so cheap, not only with comfort, but splendour, yet they are always distressed. The number of their retainers is very great, and old servants of the family are continually making their way to them from Delhi, and are sure to be received and assisted as far as their little means will permit. There is also, as I have before observed, an improvidence in the Mahomedan character, which prevents their keeping within due bounds. A predestinarian thinks little of the morrow, and hopes of future prosperity, shut their eyes to the inevitable ruin that awaits them.
>
> ... On paying a visit to any Asiatic prince, an inferior receives from him a complete dress of honour, consisting of a *khelaut*, a robe, a turban, a shield, and sword, with a string of jewels to go round the neck. This ceremony was submitted to by Lord Cornwallis when at Benares. When Lord Wellesly visited the Upper Provinces, he objected to the ceremony as too degrading, and determined to appear in the presence of the royal family in his uniform, receiving the dresses in trays as a present made to him. He had directed Mr. Neave to notify to the princes, that my rank, as a British nobleman, was such as require the same etiquette in receiving me. About nine o'clock, Mr. Neave and I set off for Shewalla, the old palace of Chet Singh, at present occupied by the Begum and her son, Mirza Khorum.
>
> ... I never experienced more pain than during this visit : everything strongly

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marked poverty, the purdahs were of red and green cloth, but in tatters; he (Mirza Khorum) himself was in a dress of good brocade, but without jewels, and his children were clad still more simply.' [163]

Though Valentia remarks that the allowance paid by the British Government was sufficient for the maintenance of the royal family, it was not really so in view of the lack of any other source of income for the family, the great number of their retinue (which continued to swell as described above) and, finally, the very high status of the family.

Records show that Lord Hastings met the family during his visit to the City in 1814[164] and Emily Eden met Begum as late in 1837, when the latter had become pretty old.[165]

Mirza Shegofta Bakht lived in the Telianala quarter with about 300 attendants.[166] He had three sons named Jalaluddin, Salimuddin and Muhammad Bakht.[167]

Prince Muzaffar Bakht lived with his mother Begum Zeebunnesa Khanum, a wife and three sons, Mirza Yamut Bakht, Mirza Mogul, another son (name unknown) and five 'left hand wives' (mistresses ?).[168] The family had fallen into 'utmost distress at the want of the necessaries of life' and though the prince's mother appealed to authorities for assistance in 1799, the Government did not accede to her request. The prince finally settled in Farukhabad where he received only Rs.750 a month from the Government.[169]

A family feud that erupted between these successors of Prince Jahandar Shah continued for a long time.[170]

Family of Mir Kasim, the deposed Nawab of Bengal

Having been defeated and ousted by the British, Mir Kasim, the independent spirited Nawab of Bengal, never did surrender and wandered throughout upper India. He ultimately breathed his last in 1777, rather obscurely, near Delhi.[171]

His family, consisting of nine children, including seven sons and two daughters, lived in Adampura Mahalla[172] and received the following allowances monthly from the British :

Mir	Muhammad Baquir (?) Khan	Rs. 350
,,	Muhammad Aziz	,, 200
,,	Abdullah	,, 100
,,	Abdul Ali	,, 100
,,	Badruddin	,, 100

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Mir Ghulam Ali	Rs. 100
,, Ghulam Hussain	,, 100
The elder daughter	,, 75
The younger daughter	,, 75
Total	Rs.1200 per month.[173]

Mir Mohamud Nasir Khan, the son-in-law of Mir Kasim, also lived in the City's Mulai Tola with his brother.[174] He was appointed the Judge of the Dewanny Adalat of the four *sircars* in the *zamindary* of Varanasi,[175] but later on became the Judge in Oudh; finally, in consequence of a feud there, he returned to Varanasi.[176] He also certified Warren Hastings.[177] Mir Kasim's sons also were among the signatories to the address certifying Hastings in 1788.[178]

Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, once the minister of Nawab Mir Kasim Ali Khan of Bengal, was later appointed the first Indian Magistrate and Judge of Varanasi under the British.*

Nawab Saadat Ali : He was the eldest brother of Nawab Asafuddaula of Oudh who sat on the throne of Oudh in 1775. Saadat Ali came to live in Varanasi and settled in the Durga Kund mahalla. He set up a bazar called Nawab Ganj for the convenience of his retinue.[179] The Government allowed up to 4 or 5 bullock loads of grain necessary for that purpose to pass duty free.[180] Here he appointed one Davies to teach English[181] whom he later sued on charges of non-payment of a debt and finally won a decree. Saadat Ali also appointed one Robinson, another European, as his dog-keeper.[182] Nawab Asafuddaula of Oudh passed away in 1797 and was succeeded by Wazir Ali, by appointment of the late Nawab, but soon a dispute over the succession arose and the British decided the case in favour of Saadat Ali.[183] Saadat Ali left Varanasi early in 1798[184] to replace Wazir Ali in the throne of Oudh.

Nawab Dil Diller Khan : He lived in the City with his family and attendants.

Nawab Shamsuddaula : He belonged to the royal family of Oudh, but around 1820 lived in the City with his Begum and sons, Nazimuddaula, Mirza Hazi and Mirza Abbajan.[185] The Nawab used to reside in the Durga Kund quarter with a large number of armed attendants. W. W. Bird, the

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* See Chapters XII and XIX for further details.

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Magistrate, wanted the number of these armed attendants to be reduced in view of the following incident of 1820, which showed the Nawab's defiance of the Magistrate.[186]

On the high road at Durga Kund, there was a wall that enclosed the Nawab's premises from this direction. Along the whole length of this wall, he erected a tiled shed which projected so far into the road that it became a serious public inconvenience and a complaint was made to the Magistrate. Hoping to accommodate the Nawab, the Magistrate proceeded to the spot in person and directed that the Nawab's people should remove that part of the shed which appeared to him to be most objectionable, which was obeyed, and Bird allowed the rest of the structure to stand. After a few months had passed, the Nawab suddenly ordered the removed portion to be rebuilt, not only without any prior notification to the Magistrate, but also in the face of local police officers sent to remonstrate against it. This rebuilt section was then occupied by armed followers.

In front of the shed, the Nawab erected several manned sentry boxes presumably for protecting the arms and other personal property of the Nawab and his attendants. As the Magistrate himself witnessed later, this shed was an additional obstruction to the thoroughfare and a source of extreme annoyance to the public. But though the Magistrate was offended at this act of defiance, he did not take any step against the Nawab for fear of offending a person of his rank.[187] The matter was finally referred to the Governor-General, but, apparently, no action was taken against the Nawab.

In 1828, after the Nawab had passed away, some women who had cost him 'very large sums of money' fled from the widowed Begum. She, intending to retain them as her rightful property, requested the local authority to keep the women under restraint pending trial. She also offered to provide for their maintenance during their confinement, otherwise, she feared, the women might abscond.[188] When W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Govenor-General, requested the women to return to the Begum's *zenana*, they declared that 'if any attempt were made to force them to return, they would destroy themselves'. With this, Brooke decided against entertaining the Begum's request.

Wazir Ali Shah : The deposed Nawab of Oudh, he was asked to live in Varanasi. There he revolted against the British and in 1799 he and his

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retinues killed some British officers, including Resident G. F. Cherry, and left the City.*

Amrita Rao Peshwa : The adopted son of Raghoba, he was put under custody along with Baji Rao II by Peshwa Madhav Rao. When they were set free after the death of Madhav Rao, Baji Rao II was placed on the throne of Peshwa. Amrita Rao, who was granted an allowance of Rs.7 lakhs per year, came to Varanasi in 1803 to reside permanently.[189] He was attended by a large group of followers, numbering some 4000, including both infantry and cavalry,[190] settling in the southern part of the City near Kurukshetra Talao.[191] A tunnel that channeled Ganga water to the Kurukshetra Talao caused great inconvenience to the armed followers of the Peshwa, as their encampment would flood during seasonal overflows, and the drain passage was blocked.[192]

The number of the Peshwa's attendants, together with the Marathas who had settled here permanently under the leadership of two Maratha chiefs in 1807, rose to around 30,000. In view of the power these chiefs had wielded in the recent past, their independent spirit and occasional manifestations of arrogance, this enormous population of Marathas became a source of suspicion and apprehension, not only in the minds of the local residents, but also in the minds of the local British authority.

In 1807, one incident giving rise to this apprehension was reported in the following letter[193] from W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General, to N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government in the Political Department, Fort William, on October 14, 1807 :

> 'A disturbance happened this morning in the camp of His Highness Amrit Rao which created a very unpleasant sensation in the minds of the inhabitants of the City, who have not been free from a considerable degree of alarm ever since the arrival of His Highness and of the additional number of Maharattahs who have accompanied the two Sardars, Pandoo Rung Rao and Hurry Pant Putwurdhan, to this place.
>
> As it is probable that exaggerated accounts of this tumult may be written to Calcutta by some of the natives, I have deemed it my duty to acquaint you, for the information of the Right Honourable the Governor-General-in-Council, that the disturbance has been completely quelled.
>
> This tumult, it seems, was occasioned by a dispute between a sepoy and a horseman both in the service of His Highness Amrit Rao; the consequence of which was that the troops took the part of their comrades, and thus the infantry with two guns and the cavalry were immediately under arms, and opposed to each other. As soon as His Highness Amrit Rao was made acquainted with the circumstances, he

* See Chapter XIX for further details.

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instantly took the necessary measure to suppress the disturbance which was effected and tranquillity restored in less than an hour. The people of the City however having heard that all the Maharattahs were under arms became greatly alarmed and shut up their shops and houses.

I avail myself of this opportunity to observe that in my opinion, the Force at this station is by no means adequate to the protection of the City. While there are from twenty to twenty-five thousand Maharattahs residing in and about its environs, the natives, I know, are under a considerable degree of apprehension on this account and I must confess that I am not without my share of uneasiness. In thus expressing myself I do not wish to convey the slightest distrust of His Highness Amrit Rao whose invariable good conduct entitles him to every degree of confidence; but it may not always be within His Highness's Power to quell the tumults which may break out amongst his followers, or which may arise between them and the inhabitants, and in a place so crowded with needy adventures, ready to join in any species of depredation. It appears to me ... that Benares, the richest city in Hindoostan and in the centre of the British Dominion, should be protected by a stronger force than is at present stationed here.'

Brooke's fears regarding British troop strength at the local Cantonment was met with a slight increase in forces.[194] It is also evident from the letter that Amrita Rao was a man of good and amiable disposition, and the following act of kindness and generosity bears witness to this :

In January of 1817, Amrita Rao sent an emissary to Magistrate Bird saying that before he took his final departure from Varanasi, he wished to procure the release of every person confined at Varanasi for debt and that he was disposed to come forward with the amount required for this purpose, provided it should not exceed the sum of Rs.18,000.[195] The Magistrate accepted Amrita Rao's noble offer and personally saw to the matter recording the following :

'I lost no time in promoting to the utmost of my power so desirable an object : The sum for which the whole of the debtors, 68 in number, were confined, amounted to 26,500 Rupees. I assembled their creditors, and after looking into each respective case, succeeded in effecting an arrangement to the satisfaction of both parties, by which the amount required, for the purpose in question, was reduced to 17,910 Rupees. This being done, the prisoners were, at His Highness's request, conducted to him, escorted by a Guard of sepoy; the Guard returned with the money, and His Highness had the gratification of seeing the prisoners set at liberty at his own door.'[196]

By way of recognizing this act of benevolence the Government decided that to make the act as public as possible, on the occasion of the next public durbar, the *vakeel* of Amrita Rao would be invested with an honorary dress. Publication by the Government and *Calcutta Gazettee*[197] of

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the necessary extracts of correspondence between the Government and the Peshwa regarding this issue was also directed. Bishop Heber, who had collected information about Varanasi mainly from W. A. Brooke during his visit to Varanasi, writes that besides a Government allowance, the Peshwa had a vast private fortune and was one of the chief almsgivers of the City.[198] Bishop Heber leaves the following account of Amrita Rao's munificence :

> '... On his name-day, that is, in Hindoostan the day on which his patron-god is worshipped, he annually gave a seer of rice and a rupee to every Brahmin, and every blind and lame person who applied between sun-rise and sun-set. He had a large garden, a short distance from the city, with four gates, three of which were set open for the reception of the three different classes of applicants and the fourth for the Peshwa and his servants to go backwards and forwards. On each person receiving his dole, he was shown into the garden, where he was compelled to stay during the day lest he should apply twice, but he had shade, water, company, and idols enough to make a Hindoo (who seldom eats till sun set) pass his time very pleasantly. The sums distributed on these occasions are said to have, in some instance, amounted to above 50,000 rupees. His annual charities altogether averaged, I was informed, probably three times that amount !'

Heber also reports the passing away of the Peshwa in this account :

> 'He (Amrita Rao) died the second night of my residence at Secrole (early September 1824); Mr Brooke said he was really a good and kind man, religious to the best of his knowledge and munificent, not from ostentation but principle. There are yet, I understand, some living instances of splendid bounty among the Hindoos of Benares....'[199]

From the above we can surmise that Amrita Rao had maintained good relations with the local British authority and that Brooke held a high opinion of him. He also exerted his influence during the House Tax movement of 1810 to pacify the agitation of the people and to restore normalcy to the City.[200] When Lord Hastings visited in 1814, he, along with his son, Vinayak Rao, welcomed the Governor-General with the usual display of pomp and grandeur.[201] Jagannath Shastri, the Parvatiya scholar of Sanskrit and a student of Pandit Gangaram was the court-pandit of Amrita Rao.[202]

In his waning years, Amrita Rao showed interest in Christianity and once sent a message to Morris, a local Missionary, asking him to pay a call, as he was 'anxious to obtain a further knowledge of Christianity.'[203] Though Amrita Rao failed to play an important role in his native homeland, he left an indelible mark on Varanasi, especially for his

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magnanimity. His son, Vinayak Rao, left the City some four years after his passing away.[204]

Chimnaji Appa, the youngest brother of Peshwa Baji Rao II, after the passing away of Peshwa Madhav Rao Narayan and before the final accession of Peshwa Baji Rao II in 1796, ascended the throne of Peshwa for a short time in 1796.[205] He migrated to Varanasi with a large number of attendants and lived near the confluence of the Ganga and Asi rivers.[206]

In 1821, an affray took place between the attendants of Chimnaji and one Evans, a conductor of ordnance and in charge of military stores, when the latter was passing through the City by river. The circumstances leading to the affray are briefly as follows :[207]

In strong winds, Evans with a *bazra* (a large roofed boat) and four boats laden with gunpowder and other military stores, was proceeding down the Ganga with the assistance of *goon* (ropes). He arrived near Asi Sangam Ghat altogether ignorant of any interdiction which would prevent his approach to the ghat. Suddenly, he found that a group of forty of Chimnaji's men had stopped the *dandees* (boatmen) who were dragging the *goons*, calling loudly to them to keep off approaching menacingly. Evans brought his *bazra* to the bank, landed and endeavoured to suppress the disturbance, while seizing one man who was most aggressive at the same time. The dispute that then arose threatened to become serious as the soldiers forming Evan's guard got off the boats and a large body of Chimnaji's followers approached to rescue the man held by Evans. At this point, one Chunilal, a *chaprasi*, first put the notice of the Magistrate to be exhibited to all passengers approaching the ghat into Evan's hand. The notice had been originally drafted to guard against the chance of any such dispute occurring. It is reported that having read the notice, Evans was prepared to quit the ghat, but by then Chimnaji's men would not allow his boats to move. Serious violence threatened to erupt when the timely arrival of the City's Naeb Kotwal and the Thanadar of Dashashwamedh quelled the disorder and Evan's fleet proceeded on to Raj Ghat.

Chimnaji appointed one Yumaji for ornamenting Jnanavapi, the famous sacred well, and paving the Vishwanath Gali, the lane approaching Vishwanatha Temple. James Prinsep, the Assay Master of Benares and Secretary, Committee for Local Improvement, also gave his assistance to this work.[208]

Gulam Muhammad : This celebrated Ruhela chief willing to reside in

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Varanasi, was allowed to do so by the Governor-General[209] in 1794, though he possibly passed away soon after his arrival. He left behind a widow, a son and attendants numbering about 150.[210] Valentia recorded that during his visit to the City in 1803, he had occasion to see the son of Gulam Muhammad whom he described as 'very fine and fair'.[211]

Mirza Muhammad Sadat : He was the son-in-law of Nawab Moneeruddaula and lived in the City. He certified Hastings.[212]

Mardaan Ali Khan and Shujah Ally Khan : They were the sons of Nawab Muhammad Ally Khan and also lived in Varanasi. They also certified Hastings.[213]

Said Afzul Ali Khan and Said Himmat Ali Khan : These two were grandsons of Mir Rustam Ali Khan, the Collector and Administrator of Varanasi in the early eighteenth century. They lived in the City and certified Hastings.[214]

Nawab Muhammad Akbar Khan : He was the brother of Haider Beg Khan, the Nawab of Farrukhabad. He petitioned for residence in Varanasi which the Government complied with granting an allowance of Rs.2,000 per month.[215] He migrated to the City around 1787 and there soon passed away, survived by a son.[216]

Rai Dip Chand : He was the dewan of the Nawab of Farrukhabad. He also prayed to the Government to reside at Varanasi, which was granted with an allowance of Rs.500 per month.[217]

The ex-Raja of Coorg : He was brought to Varanasi where he received an allowance of Rs.3,915-8 per month in 1842.[218] Mrs Colin Mackenzie, who had visited the City with her husband in 1847, leaves an account mentioning that they had met the Raja there in January. She writes about the meeting, 'He is a small man ... he greeted my husband with a degree of cordiality which rather surprised me considering that their first acquaintance was at the taking of Coorg'.[219]

The ex-Raja of Goomsur : He was brought to the City around 1892 and given an allowance of about Rs.660 per month. Hury Kissen Bunga, his adopted son,[220] also came with him.

Raja Durjan Sal : He was the chief of Bharatpur who occupies a prominent place in the history of Modern India for his independent spirit and stiff resistance against the British when they invaded his kingdom.

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After the fall of Bharatpur, he and his son, Kunwar Mukund Singh, were brought to Varanasi in around 1842 by a revengeful Government and given an inadequate monthly allowance of Rs.500 each, insulting their dignity and positions as Raja and Prince.[221]

Kadkad Khatri : He was a Nepalese chief who lived in the City around 1842, and received an allowance of Rs.300 per month.[222]

Raja Pratap Singh, the ex-Raja of Satara : Though belonging to the illustrious lineage of Maharaja Shivaji of Maharashtra, Pratap Singh lacked the military genius of his great predecessor and was deposed by the imperialist forces. He was finally brought to Varanasi in around 1842, where he was granted an allowance of Rs.9,575 per month in consideration of his status.[223] While visiting Varanasi in 1847, Mrs Colin Mackenzie met him at his house and leaves the following account of this visit :[224]

> 'After tiffin, C, and I, Count Goertz, and the two young ladies, set forth on our visit to the Sattara Ranis.... We three ladies were ushered into a room quite bare of furniture, where the Rajah sat smoking his *huqa*.... In a few minutes he took me by the hand, or rather by the wrist ... and conducted us through one or two low rooms with curtains instead of doors, to a mean apartment, long, low and dark, where the Ranis sat. One of them we were desired not to approach or touch; the other, and the Rajah's daughter, shook hands with us, and placed us in chairs by her side : two other ladies sat on the other side of the room like us, close to the wall. M. speaks Hindustani very imperfectly, therefore we could not say much. The Rajah left us, and I admired the dress of the ladies, which consisted of a very short red Jacket with short sleeves, armlets, bracelets, and a nose ring, chiefly of pearls; a red drapery, embroidered or sprigged with gold, enveloped the whole person. The attendants (one of them a very fine looking woman) wore a cloth, put on just like the bearers, leaving the right leg exposed to the knee, and a very handsome stout limb it was.
>
> ... Wreaths and bracelets of the double white Indian jessamine were brought and thrown over our necks and arms, a pretty and poetical mode of welcome, then six trays of fruit, barley, sugar, & c., were laid at our feet, we ate a little, but did not take any fruit, not knowing what it might be proper or improper to do with the peel, as there were no plates. One of the door curtains was lowered, and a band stationed behind it; a singing woman, with stiff outstanding petticoats of red and gold, was introduced. Her singing was to me almost inaudible, and her dancing consisted of advancing and retreating a few steps, holding her left arm akimbo, and gently twirling her right hand in the air, as if on a pivot ... *pan*, i.e., little green packets of leaves, inside which is a kind of seed mixed with powdered lime was brought to us with the spices. The natives chew this, leaf and all : it dyes the mouth a bright red colour, and has a very pungent taste.'

Nawab Wazid Ali Shah : He was deposed by the British from the throne of Oudh on the plea of his inefficiency, though the legitimacy and

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propriety of this act could hardly be justified. On his way to the capital of British India, Calcutta, where he had been asked to settle down, he came to Varanasi on April 16, 1856.[225] He stayed here for ten days at the bidding of Maharaja Ishwarinarain who invited him mentioning the 'unwavering loyalty of his house to the Royal house of Lucknow and the cordial relation that existed between the two houses'.[226] The Nawab was given royal treatment during his stay in Varanasi and he and his queen were accommodated in the best palace of the Maharaja, while the nobility and ladies of the Nawab's retinue were accommodated in other palaces. The whole party was entertained on an unprecedented scale in various other ways, which made the deposed and ill-fated Nawab immensely happy.

Ishwarinarain made a customary offering of Rs.5,500 as a mark of loyalty and homage to the Nawab who left Varanasi on April 25, 1856. Before leaving, he had invested the Maharaja with the usual *khelat* and the Maharaja then offered another *nazar* of 101 *ashrafi* (gold mohars) as an expression of his homage to the Nawab.[227] The Maharaja, deeply moved by the tragic fate of the Nawab, appealed to the people to postpone the observance of the *Dewali* and *Holi* festivals in the City that year out of sympathy for him.[228]

Anwar Bakht and his brother : These were sons of Tipu Sultan, the great hero of Mysore, who fought gallantly against the British, only to surrender. The two princes, whom Tipu had handed over to the British as hostages,[229] were brought to Varanasi on May 4, 1799, via Calcutta. They and their mother passed their last days here, where they were buried in obscurity.[230]

Ralla Mishra : He was an aristocrat in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab and became a prominent citizen of Varanasi. Lahore being captured by the British, Ralla Mishra came to the City in or around 1800 to pass his last days. He had a fine house and garden in Bhadaini where the idol of Jagannath was installed.

Lehna Singh Majithia : He was also a Sikh aristocrat who migrated to Varanasi. Being disgusted with the British policies of aggrandisement in the Punjab he left his homeland on the pretence of a pilgrimage in March 1844. He went to Hardwar and afterwards to Varanasi,[231] as Varanasi was also considered holy by the Sikhs for its association with Guru Nanak.

Surat Singh Majithia : He was also a Sikh general of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. After their victory in the second Anglo-Sikh War of 1848-49, the

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British disbanded the Sikh Army. They now suspected that Surat Singh was plotting with Mir Muhammad of Kabul to free the Punjab from the yoke of the British and they sent Surat Singh to Varanasi where his father, Sardar Lehna Singh, was already residing.[232] It is somewhat surprising that both father and son were reported to have assisted local authorities in quelling the Sepoy Mutiny in the City, in spite of their anti-British background.[233]

OTHER NON-LOCAL ROYALTY AND THEIR AGENTS

Rani Ahalya Bai (1725-1795) and her *Gomasta* Beniram Pathak : The two ladies to whom present day Varanasi remains immensely grateful for various works of beautification and munificence were Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore and Rani Bhavani of Bengal. It is Ahalya Bai who constructed the present temple of Vishwanatha, the presiding deity of the City. We do not know exactly when she visited the City or where she stayed, but that she kept close contact with the City through Beniram Pathak, her *gomasta*, is quite evident. Beniram continued to manage her property and supervise the construction work already undertaken, e.g., the building of the temple, even after the passing away of the Rani. Beniram also purchased a plot of land in the Raj Ghat Fort ground for constructing a *dharmashala.* In a letter to the Government, the Rani requested the former to see that her men should not be interrupted in any way in their work of construction of the *dharmashalas* and ghats in Kashi and at other places for charitable and sacred purposes.[234] Other munificent works of Rani Ahalya Bai include the construction of Dashashwamedh and Manikarnika Ghats and a ghat for the exclusive use of the female bathers in Manikarnika, building of the Tarakeshwara Temple and the Ganga Temple and three other temples on the ghats of Ganga, six more temples in the City, and one Brahmapuri for the settlement of the Brahmins.[235]

The Peshwas

Like other Maratha chiefs, the Peshwas also had a great fascination for Kashi. This was best demonstrated in 1782, when Peshwa Madhav Rao Narayan asked Mahadaji Sindhia that in case a treaty between the English and the Marathas were possible, to request whether the British Government would accept, among other conditions, that 'Cossejeew (Kashiji) Benares, which is the Hindu *Rajya*, must be given to me, and I will give in exchange for it some other country, and until I do give it, I

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will pay the same revenue as was paid by Rajah Chet Singh'. The Peshwa's offer was not, however, acceptable to the British.[236]

We also know nothing about Peshwa's visits to Varanasi, but the grandmother of Peshwa Madhav Rao visited the City in March 1794, when an appropriate arrangement of guard consisting of one *havildar*,[237] one *naik* and twelve sepoys was made on behalf of the local British authority. Peshwa Baji Rao II constructed the present Kalabhairava Temple[238] which is still frequented by a large number of devotees. Possibly, the Balaji Mandir at Bala Ghat was also constructed by him.

The Bhonslas

The Bhonslas had a large establishment of temples, houses, etc., in Varanasi.[239] After Raghuji III and the passing away of the last nominal Nagpur Raja, Nagpur was directly controlled by the English.*

The sister of the Bhonsla Raghuji II went on a pilgrimage and came to the City in around 1800,[240] where a high-ranking Government officer saw that she was received with every respect, due to her rank. Valentia records the following regarding her visit :

> '... on such an occasion, it is customary to give alms to the different Brahmins who amount to about seven thousand and as the ceremonies can't be performed without their assistance, they are very often unreasonable in their demand, as it seems they were to this good lady. Eight days after her arrival, she sent to Mr. Neave (*Magistrate ?*) to complain that they required a sum which she could by no means pay and that she had not been able to begin her rituals. Mr. Neave assured her that the English did not receive a rupee, so that he could do nothing except by mediation with the Brahmins, which he would attempt. He accordingly remonstrated with them and the lady was permitted to fulfil all her duties at a reasonable rate....'[241]

Beniram Pandit and Bissambhar Pandit

Madhoji Bhonsla's agent in Varanasi was Beniram Pandit. Beniram and his brother, Bissambhar Pandit, came into the limelight in the City's history on account of the help they offered Warren Hastings during his confrontation with Raja Chet Singh, for which Hastings remained ever grateful.[242] Beniram was also one of the dignitaries who certified Hastings' conduct on the occasion of his impeachment.[243] It is interesting to note that he named his son after Hastings out of esteem for him.[244] Beniram never returned to Nagpur[245] and there was a popular belief that he was sacked by

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* Details regarding Bhonsla temple establishments have been placed in the Appendix of Chapter VI.

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the Bhonsla.[246] Perhaps after Beniram, Bissambhar became the Bhonsla's *vakeel*.[247] He had a large number of attendants, about 400 in all, and had great riches.[248] Bissambhar and his men were suspected to have played a role in the City's Hindu-Muslim riot of 1809 in favour of the Hindus, which was resented by the authority.[249]

The wife of Bissambhar Pandit, who was known as *Panditain,* donated a sum of Rs.500 to the Benares Government College in 1821.[250]

Daulat Rao Sindhia

It was Sindhia who had given shelter to Varanasi's deposed king, Chet Singh,[251] but the English did not dare say anything against the powerful Sindhia for this act. And though it must have offended them, they rather pursued a policy of appeasement towards him. Sindhia also had great love and veneration for Varanasi, which was manifested on a number of occasions. He used to send his agents to the City regularly and his *karkoon,* Ramchandra Pandit,[252] stayed here for more than two months in 1798, kept a close eye on the City, and referred to Varanasi in a number of correspondences with the British Government. Once Sindhia even requested the British to grant necessary permission so that the Vishwanatha Temple could be restored to its original site at Jnanavapi, where the temple had been converted into a mosque by Aurangzeb. The Government, unwilling to incur the displeasure of the Muslims and also to take the risk of any consequent Hindu-Muslim riots, however, did not comply with his request.[253]

On another occasion, when Sindhia requested that the Oswals, a segment of the Jain community, should be prevented from constructing a temple near the Gopalji Temple in Chowkhamba, as this might cause an affray between the Hindus and the Jainas, the English did accede to his request and, accordingly, ordered Magistrate Ali Ibrahim Khan not to permit Raja Daalchand or other Oswals to construct a Jaina temple in the vicinity of the Gopalji Temple. It was further ordered that houses owned by Oswals in that locality should be acquired and made over to Jiwan Gosain, the manager of said temple, either in exchange for other houses or on payment of prices thereof.[254]

After the passing away of Sindhia in 1827, Baiza Bai, his widow, wanted to construct a ghat at Varanasi and established a *kothi* for furnishing necessary funds for the work. The construction of the ghat started early in 1829, when James Prinsep, Secretary to the Committee of Local Improvement, offered his assistance to the Rani's agent with regard

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to the construction.[255] Worrying over delays in construction,[256] Baiza Bai writes the following touching letter to Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Vice President of the Council, in July of 1834 :

> '... In the hope of reward in future state and of a good name in this world, I resolved to build a Ghat at the City of Benares and I there established a banking house (kothee) to furnish funds for the building and for charitable purpose. Obstructions have been thrown in the way, so that the work does not proceed so quickly as it ought, and the reputation of the Kothee has been injured. This is a constant source of shame to me. My future happiness and worldly reputation depend upon you....'[257]

When this ghat was completed it was called the Sindhia Ghat. Baiza Bai also constructed a beautiful colonnade over the Jnanavapi.[258]

Nana Faḍnavis : Nana wanted to construct a house at Varanasi as an occasional dwelling for which he sought permission from the English Government.[259] Possibly, it materialized, but details of his visit, if he made any, are not known. Like Sindhia, he had such a great feeling for this holy City and, especially the temple of its presiding deity, that he wanted to help the English in their battle against Tipu on condition of being allowed to restore the Vishwanatha Temple to its former site at Jnanavapi; but he did not succeed.[260]

Madhav Rao served as the Dewan of Nana Faḍnavis in Varanasi. He lived there with a large number of attendants who were sometimes unmanageable. In 1793, he and his men were involved in a violation of law and order, the details of which have been furnished in Chapter XIX.

The Raja of Vizianagaram

The Raja had a palace at Bhelupura and he occasionally lived in the City. He became renowned in Varanasi for a rare display of his munificence, pomp and grandeur.[261] He had his young son educated by G. Nicholls, the Headmaster of the English section of the Benares Government College. Nicholls reported on May 7, 1836, that the prince was steadily progressing in learning English and would do so if he continued earnestly, and that the prince was also active and intelligent.[262]

The Raja spent his last years here and passed away around 1847.[263] His son and heir was then asked to return to his kingdom.[264] When the young Raja was once asked by a European traveller, a painter, to sit for his portrait, he declined, and on the same occasion upon being asked whether he wanted to visit Europe, he answered in the negative.[265] The widowed Rani, preferred to remain in Varanasi and embraced an austre life.[266] She

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also earned a reputation for her munificence to the poor and was reported to have patronised the largest *langar khana* (almshouse) in the City.[267]

Maharaja Sir Gajapati Raj Bahadur of Vizianagaram was one of the benefactors of the English Primary School established in Bengali Tola in 1854.[268]

The Raja of Nepal

The population of Nepal is mostly Hindu and the nation's Raja is also a Hindu. Nepalese Hindus are devout worhippers of Shiva, as is reflected by a magnificent temple of Shiva that stands in Kathmandu, the capital. The people of Nepal have had a great fondness for Kashi and many would visit the City on pilgrimage, while others even settled here permanently.[269]

Ran Bahadur had abdicated the throne of Raja of Nepal and had been residing in Varanasi for three years with 500 attendants.[270] He left the City to return to his kingdom on February 24, 1804, upon the sanction of the Governor-General-in-Council,[271] accompanied by the deputies who had been in attendance on the British Resident to the Nepal Court and had later resided in Varanasi when the Raja had abdicated.[272] The Rani of Nepal lived in the Misirpokhra area of the City in 1849.[273]

The Raja presented one big bell to the Vishwanatha Temple and another to the Durga Temple.[274] Various articles were purchased by the Raja through his agents here. Resident Duncan remitted the duties on said articles, which was approved by the Governor-General who further authorized the Resident thus : '... upon any future occasion, it would appear advisable to grant a remission (of duties) on goods purchased at Benares for the use of foreign princes or chiefs with a view to cultivating a good understanding between them and the Government.'[275]

The Raja had great confidence in Pandit Ranganath the *Rajguru* of Nepal. The Rajguru became instrumental in forging friendly relations between the Raja and the British. Once, after being robbed during a pilgrimage, British Residency servants were assigned to him to ensure his safety. He came to Varanasi where he stayed for some months till November of 1831.[276] When the Rajguru wanted to retire to Varanasi and pass his last days, the Raja of Nepal sent the following *khureeta* to Lord Hardinge, the Governor-General, on February 21, 1846.[277]

> 'My friend, ... since my intimate and respected friend and Guardian Shree Raj Gooroo Rangnath Pandit, who is my hereditary spiritual preceptor and a person of high rank, as well as one in whom my Government and I myself in particular, repose

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the greatest confidence, and who was formerly engaged in the duties of increasing our friendship which by God's blessing has ever been growing firmer, is now, on account of his age and infirmities, proceeding to reside permanently at Benares. I write to request that you will have the kindness to give directions to the officers of your Government so that he may live there and perform his devotions to the shrines with all honour and respect, by which I shall be much gratified, and whatever representation the Gooroo may make with a view to the increase of our friendship consider it as proceeding from myself and oblige by acceding to it.'

The British Resident at Nepal also wrote letters to several Magistrates of Benares to ensure the Rajguru the necessary facilities and an honourable reception in Varanasi.[278] The Rajguru undertook some construction projects in Varanasi, the most important being a temple of Shiva.[279] This temple, constructed in the name of the King of Nepal, is most probably identical with the famous Pashupatishwara Temple situated near Lalita Ghat, renowned for its wooden architecture and erotic figures.

The Raja of Jaipur

During the Mughal period, the Rajas of Jaipur became highly influential and powerful in consequence of their close connections with the Mughal emperors. It was during and after this period that they undertook various construction projects in different places, including pilgrim centres like Varanasi. In one of these buildings, situated in Varanasi and later called Shantikutir, there was a *pathashala* where Jaipur princes were sent for education.

In 1809, the Collector of Benares demanded documentation and testimonials from the Raja of Jaipur to prove his ownership of buildings, etc., in Varanasi. The same demand was reiterated in 1838 and the Raja sought the intervention of the Governor-General in this regard in submitting the following :[280]

'Charitable endowments buildings in Allahabad and Fyzabad, and ... (some) buildings at Benares, have been in my possession since they were first built which you will be aware of without my intimating the same and I understand the Officers of Government are now requiring title deeds and proofs of my right; the buildings were created and established by my predecessors and have been in our possession for hundreds of years, both in the time of the kings and since the Company's rule, may it always remain, which is as well known as that the sun is in the heavens, and there is no necessity for proving that by evidence.

In October, 1809 the Collector made a similar request when Lord Minto was to whom I represented the case and was graciously presented with a free and unresumable grant for the building to remain in my undisputed possession and

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authority. Since then there has been no interference or obstacle opposed but now again the gentlemen of the Zillah, notwithstanding they have seen the *purwanah* from the Council, and the title deeds from the Governor are creating disturbance on the subject. I therefore trouble your Lordship, that you may at the representation of Rai Ruttun Singh, my *Vakeel* with you, grant such effectual documents that no further interference may take place, the building be allowed to remain as formerly, and any necessary assistance given at the request of the possessor, for I have more friendship for your Government than any other Chief....'

It would appear that this petition was granted and the Raja was allowed to retain possession of his ancestral properties in Varanasi without further complications.

Jawan Singh, the Rana of Udaipur : The Rana came to the City on November 25, 1833 and was received with honour and attention due to his rank by H. Gordon, the Agent to the Governor-General in Varanasi.[281]

Jodhpur Raja's dewan[282] and Junagar Raja's dewan[283] : They lived in the City in and around 1798.

Ramakrishna Tewari : He was Kota Bundi Raja's dewan and he lived in the City in 1797-98.[284]

Dhar Raja's queen : During the reign of Peshwa Baji Rao I, a small region in Malwa was granted to the Pawars, who made Dhar their headquarters.[285] When the king of this kingdom passed away, his widow, Maina Bai, intended to proceed to Varanasi and deposit the ashes of her deceased husband in the City. Accordingly, W. A. Brooke, Agent to the Governor-General, was requested to 'manifest to that Princess during her stay at Benares such attention and respect' as was 'due to her rank and consistent with the regulations of Government.'[286]

The Raja of Amethi : Anandabag, where the mausoleum of Swami Bhaskarananda, the celebrated monk of Varanasi, is situated and where the historic *shastrartha* took place between Swami Dayananda and Swami Vishuddhananda and other scholars of Varanasi, was owned by this Raja. He also constructed a fine temple for Shiva, which is noted for its elegant architecture and the wall-paintings of one Zulla Miyan.[287]

Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab : The details of this Maharaja's visit to Varanasi are not known. It is a well-known fact, however, that the copper plating of the stone beneath the dome of the Vishwanatha Temple (popularly known as the Golden Temple of Kashi) was covered in gold leaf by his order.[288]

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Raja Ramchandra of Chundery : He visited the City in 1798[289] and remained under a religious vow of silence for certain period as penance prescribed by Brahmins for some wrong deeds.[290]

Raja Kalyan Singh of Bihar : He had a number of houses in the City which were alleged to have been wrongly encroached upon the Kashmiri Mall, the famous shroff of Varanasi by a forged mortgage deed.[291] The matter was referred to the Government in 1786,[292] the consequence of which is not known.

Raja of Tanjore : No records were found to indicate whether this Raja ever visited Varanasi during his lifetime. However, Abbe J. A. Dubois, the famous French traveller, recorded in his work entitled, *Hindu Manners and Customs*, that when the King of Tanjore died in 1801, arrangements were made to have his relics carried to Varanasi by thirty Brahmins to immerse them in the sacred waters of the Ganga.[293]

The Rajguru of Tanjore : He lived in the City and records show that he donated Rs.140 to the Benares Government College on December 21, 1822.[294]

OTHER DISTINGUISHED PERSONS

Ambaji Tattia : He came from Nagpur to the City on pilgrimage and lived here in 1798 and was attended by the local Government.[295]

Appa Rao : He was the brother of Raja Rai Rayan, a *mutsuddi* of high rank in the service of the *Nizam* of Hyderabad. He, along with one Satya Sundar Swami, his mother and a large number of attendants came to City on pilgrimage and stayed here for four months during the rainy season of 1786. Madhoji Bhonsla requested the British Government to offer all possible facilities to the party on the way and at the places of pilgrimage, and to exempt them from duties. At this, the Government replied that such exemption could be granted on the condition that Appa Rao submit a list of those who had accompanied him from the Deccan, not including those who had joined him upon his arrival. However, when the party reached Gaya, the number for whom the exemption of duty was requested was reported to have been five to six thousand. The Government finally allowed an exemption for one thousand of the attendants, and that, too, only to please Madhoji Bhonsla.[296]

Chintamani Dikshit : He was a man of position who came to the City

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from Puna on pilgrimage in 1798, and was duly attended by the local Government.

Daod Rao and Bissumbhar : They came to the City during 1797 on pilgrimage from Hyderabad and brought a letter of recommendation from the British Resident there.[297] They were duly attended by the local authority.[298]

Govinda Raghunath Pandit and Sheonath Bhat Pandit : They visited the City on pilgrimage with group of one thousand persons. Rani Ahalya Bai of Indore requested the Government to exempt the pilgrim tax, which it did.[299]

Harihar Rao Parshuram : A distinguished Maratha who came to the City in 1807 on pilgrimage with a group of attendants numbering about 6,000.[300]

Jailal, Raja : He visited the City in 1797 and was duly attended by the local Government.[301]

Lachhman Rao : He was a Maratha noble who, along with his brother, Luckaram, visited the City around April of 1797. They were duly received and given presents of *kincaubs*, etc., by the local Government.[302]

Morobaji Phaḍke : He was also a Maratha noble and the nephew of Haripanth Phaḍke, who was a friend and colleague of Nana Faḍnavis. He came to the City in 1785 with a group of 800 attendants and performed all religious rites to his satisfaction.[303]

Pandu Rang Rao : Also a Maratha noble who visited the City in 1807 with a large group of pilgrims and attendants totalling a record 12,000 persons.[304]

Ramsing Rukwar : He visited the City in May 1798 and was duly attended by the local Government, but further details about him are not known.[305]

Munshi Vishnu Singh Kohli : He was a man of position in the Mughal court but left Delhi when Nadir Shah ransacked the place. He migrated to Varanasi in 1818. His grandson, Gopal Krishna Kohli, was one of the courtiers of Raja Uditnarain of Kashi.[306]

Serfoji II (1800-32) : The son of Tulaji II of Nagpur, he was the main architect of the Raja Serfoji Saraswati Mahal Library collection of today. The manuscripts were collected by Serfoji II from various sources including Varanasi, where he had come on pilgrimage.[307]

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Lakshmi Bai, later Queen of Jhansi : Born as Manu Bai in 1835 near Asi in Varanasi, her parents were Morapant Tambe, a Maratha scholar, and Bhagirathi Devi. In 1844 she was married to Gangadhar, the Raja of Jhansi, who also had visited Varanasi. She is celebrated in the history of Modern India for her independent spirit and heroic fight against the British Imperialists.[308]

Venkat Acharya : He was a south Indian noble with a great fondness for pomp and procession. It is assumed that he came to Varanasi and lived here for some time, as he left a vast property and executed a will in 1849 in which he made provisions for donations to public institutions situated in Varanasi.

The Bengalees : There were many prominent Bengalees, for example, Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal, Raja Kalishankar Ghoshal, Baboo Gurudas Mitra, Baboo Kalinath Bapuli, who either lived, visited, or had various connections here, and left their mark on the religious and socio-cultural history of Modern Varanasi.*

MOST DISTINGUISHED PERSONS

Among the distinguished personalities living in Varanasi towards the close of the eighteenth century, some assumed a very high profile with the public and the authorities alike. An official list[309] of these individuals, including numbers of male attendants and armed employees, is quoted below. It seems that those of royal lineage, having had considerable power and position in the immediate past, found their way to the top of this list :

Persons occupying the Highest Rank :

Name	Number of Male Dependants	Number of Armed Attendants	Number of Armed Attendants appearing abroad with their Master
Begum Qutlaq Khan, widow of Jahandar Shah, and her son Khorum Bakht	1,000	300	200
Mirza Shegofta Bakht, another son of Jahandar Shah	300	100	60
Begum Jahanabadee, widow of Jahandar Shah and her son Mirza Ali Kadir	125	50	50

* See Chapter XVI for further details.

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Son of Nawab Dil Diler Khan	100	25	10
Raja of Nepal	500	500	200
Raja Uditnarain of Varanasi	400	200	200
Widow of Gulam Muhammad Khan, the Ruhela Chief	150	60	60

The following persons of great opulence also occupied a special position in local society during this time :

Name	Number of Male Dependants	Number of Armed Attendants	Number of Armed Attendants appearing abroad with their Master
Bissambhar Pandit, Dewan of Nagpur	400	80	6
Raja Manohar Das, Nagarseth, i.e., Head of the Shroffs and merchants of the City	40	15	20
Bhawani Das, Shroff	100	50	4
Dwaraka Das, Shroff	200	100	10
Moti Chand, Shroff	100	50	6
Mukund Lal, Shroff	100	75	25
Ballam Das, Shroff	25	15	2
Jumna Das, Shroff	100	25	5
Arit (Arat ?) Ram Tewary, Shroff	?	?	?
Balkishen Das, Shroff	25	10	-

The following list of distinguished persons of a later period, that is, first quarter of nineteenth century has been prepared on the basis of the norms forming inclusion on the previous list, and on records of their careers, public works, as well as contemporary evaluations. The list includes some names that were listed earlier, yet survived into this period :

Peshwa Amrita Rao
Chimnaji Appa

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Nawab Shamsuddaula of Oudh
Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal
Raja Kalishankar Ghoshal
Raja Shivaprasad
Baboo Shivnarain Singh
Baboo Deokinandan Singh

The following list of most important persons of the second quarter of nineteenth century also includes some names that were listed earlier, yet survived into this period :

Maharaja Ishwariprasad Narain Singh, the Kashi Naresh
Maharaja of Vizianagaram
Raja Pratap Singh, the ex-Raja of Satara
The ex-Raja of Coorg
The ex-Raja of Goomsur and his adopted son
Pandit Ranganath, the Rajguru of Nepal
Baboo Deonarayan Singh
Baboo Rajendra Mitra
Baboo Gurudas Mitra
Baboo Fatehnarain Singh
Raja Patni Mall
Raja Madholal
Baboo Kalinath Bapuli (Raja Babu)

LIFE-STYLES OF THE ARISTOCRATS

The above survey shows that the distinguished persons having association with Varanasi can be placed into one of three groups : first, would be those who visited the City or came here to pass their last days; second, deposed chiefs who were deported here; and third, those either born here or who had settled here for an extended period.

The first group's motivation was evidently religious. Consequently, their stay in the City mostly impacted citizens involved in the field of religion. Nevertheless, their large retinues also involved the procurement of both essential and luxury goods which enriched other sectors of the City's economy.

As regards the deposed chiefs, most of them, with a few notable exceptions such as Amrita Rao Peshwa and also those who had brought with them their court musicians and court painters, hardly left any impact

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on the City. This is due to the fact that most of them had little or no private fortunes to bring into Varanasi and they had to subsist mainly on the stringent allowances granted them by the Government, making them helplessly dependent upon the latter. The already deplorable conditions of their families and those under their care would further deteriorate should the Government decide to reduce these allowances, which often occurred with the demise of the head of the family. Moreover, freedom of movement was censured by the Government and these chiefs and their families were practically bound to lead a life of confinement with their attendants. This often resulted in frustration and their eventual demoralization. And though they entertained guests, including the occasional Government official, they had little rapport with the local people or any identification with the City itself.

The third group of nobility formed the core of the aristocrats of the City for all practical purposes. Their chief financial resources were business, mainly banking, insurance and/or, landed property or services. They were brought up in a cultural milieu that was basically Hindu intermingled with elements of Islamic tradition in consequence of prolonged Muslim rule during the preceding centuries.

Their way of life was mostly similar to that of their counterparts throughout India; living in palatial buildings with large numbers of relatives and staff, leading a life of pomp and grandeur, indulging in various socially warranted and unwarranted recreations, engaging each other in competitions on occasions like the Budhwamangal which sometimes led to fatal consequences, patronizing men of distinction in the fields of religion, learning, music and fine art, etc., as well as having a deep faith in God, all these were some of the salient features of the multi-dimensional life-styles of the *rais* of Varanasi.

We have already noted two accounts of English dignitaries visiting the Raja of Kashi and the Satara Raja, which throw light on the private lives of these chiefs and nobles. Here we shall present another account by Bishop Heber, which furnishes minute details, including the family shrines, of a local aristocrat's (name not mentioned) mansion in the City.* Heber writes :[310]

'... close to the Jayanarayan school was a fine house belonging to two minors, the

* It appears that the mansion referred to here was the Deokinandan ki Haveli, owned by Baboo Deokinandan.

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sons of a celebrated Baboo, who had made a vast fortune as dewan to some Europeans, high in office, as well as to some natives of rank resident in and near Benares, which we had time to see. It was a striking building, and had the advantage, very unusual in Benares, of having a vacant area of some size before the door, which gave us an opportunity of seeing its architecture. It is very irregularly built round a small court, two sides of which are taken up by the dwelling house, the others by offices. The house is four lofty stories high, with a tower over the gate of one story more. The front has small windows of various forms, some of them projecting on brackets and beautifully carved, and a great part of the wall itself is covered with a carved pattern of sprigs, leaves, and flowers, like an old-fashioned paper. The whole is of stone, but painted a deep red. The general effect is by no means unlike some of the palaces at Venice, as it is represented in Canaletto's views.

We entered a gateway similar to that of a college, with a groined arch of beautifully rich carving, like that on the roof of Christ church gateway, though much smaller. On each side is a deep richly-carved recess, like a shrine in which are idols with lamps before them, the household gods of the family. The court is covered with plantains and rose-trees, with a raised and ornamented well in its centre; on the left hand a narrow and steep flight of stone steps, the meanest part of the fabric, without balustrades, and looking like the approach to an English granary, led to the first story.

At their foot we were received by the two young heirs, stout little fellows of thirteen and twelve, escorted by their uncle, an immensely fat Brahmin pandit, who is the spiritual director of the family, and a little shrewd-looking smooth spoken, but vulgar and imprudent man, who called himself their Moonshee. They led us up to the show-rooms which are neither large nor numerous; they are, however, very beautifully carved, and the principal of them which occupies the first floor of the gateway, and is a square with a Gothic arcade round it, struck me as exceedingly comfortable. The centre, about fifteen feet square, is raised and covered with a carpet, serving as a divan. The arcade round is flagged with a good deal of carving and ornament, and is so contrived that on a very short notice, four streams of water, one in the centre of each side descend from the roof like a permanent shower-bath, and fall into stone basons sunk beneath the floor and covered with a sort of open fret-work, also of stone.

These rooms were hung with good English prints of the common paltry description which was fashionable twenty years ago, of Sterne and poor Maria, (the boys supposed this to be a doctor feeling a lady's pulse) the sorrows of Werter, & C. together with a daub of the present Emperor of Delhi, and several portraits in oil of a much better kind, of the father of these boys, some of his powerful native friends and employers and of a very beautiful woman of European complexion but in an Eastern dress, of whom the boys knew nothing, or would say nothing more than that the picture was painted for their father by Lalljee of Patna. I did not, indeed, repeat the question, because I knew the reluctance with which all Eastern nations speak of their women, but it certainly had the appearance of a portrait; and as well as the Baboo's picture, would have been called a creditable painting in most gentlemen's houses in England.

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Our little friends were very civil, and pressed us to stay for breakfast, but it was already late. We looked, however, before we went, at the family pagoda, which stood close to the house, and was, though small, as rich as carving, painting, and gilding could make it. The principal shrine was that of Siva, whose emblem rose just seen amid the darkness of the inner sanctuary crowned with scarlet flowers, with lamps burning before it. In front, and under the centre cupola, was the sacred bull richly painted and crowned likewise with scarlet flowers, and over all hung a large silver bell, suspended from the roof like a Chandelier.'

These three accounts of visits to the residences of nobles, including the Kashi Naresh, left to us by Europeans illustrate the hospitality with which distinguished guests were received by aristocrats, and how general arrangements for singing, dancing and the offering of *paan* (betel), formed the essential elements of the reception and entertainment of such guests.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ARISTOCRATS

The questionable practices of some *rais*, like the keeping of mistresses,[311] were far outshone by the numerous instances of their religious fervour and public spirit. At a time when there was almost no Government patronization, these aristocrats played a historic role in protecting and promoting the religion and culture of the land through their support of pandits, musicians and artists, the construction and renovation of temples and ghats, and the running of alms-houses and organizing of festivals. A few also opened schools for the propagation of modern education and established asylums for people with special needs.

There is no denying that behind such religious and philanthropic activities, the rais had ulterior motives such as name and fame, religious merit and recognition and favour from the Government. But the importance and value of their contribution and service can hardly be exaggerated in the backdrop of rule by a foreign Government that cherished a desire to transform the very character of the country to serve its own self-interest.

EMERGENCE OF A NEW ELITE

Another uniqueness of the local Hindu nobility was that some of them had regular contact and relations with the Europeans, and others went so far as to establish contact with Christian missionaries and showed interest in Christianity. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, a trend towards combining modernity with tradition was observed among some nobility, who significantly, were all Hindus, excepting a very few Jains.

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We have already noted that the Vizianagaram Prince was studying English with G. Nicholls. Similarly, the learning of English had begun in the family of the Maharaja of Varanasi. The aristocratic families of the City felt the urgent necessity of learning English for the obvious reason that English happened to be the language of the rulers and the *lingua franca* of the day.

Consequently, it was through the study of English and close association with the British that aristocrats had got the unique opportunity to form some ideas about Western civilization, which, in turn, influenced the thinking of some. This explains how nobles and public figures like Raja Deonarayan Singh, President of the Benares Institute, Baboo Fatehnarain Singh, Vice President of the Benares Institute, and Raja Shivaprasad evolved a more modern outlook. Gradually, local nobility became divided into two groups which, according to Reverend Sherring, was reflected in discussions at the Benares Institute. At these sessions, one group would support traditional ways, while the other criticized them and advocated the modification in the light of the ideas imported from the West.[312] Herein lay the genesis of a new elite, a class that would later come into greater prominence and infuse a new spirit into the socio-cultural milieu of the City.*

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* More detailed information on this subject can be found in Chapter V.

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70. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 339.
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mittra, etc.*, pp. 12-13.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
74. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 339.
75. *Ibid.*
76. See the Inscription set on the College wall.
77. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
78. See the entry of Mahadaji Sindhia in this Chapter.
79. See Chapter II.
80. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.

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81. *Ibid.*
82. See Chapter XX.
83. *Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mittra, etc.*, pp. 12-13.
84. Sherring, *Benares*. p. 339.
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mittra, etc.*, pp. 12-13.
87. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 23.
88. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
89. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 434, date of entry : 24 August 1832.
90. *Ibid.*
91. An address (*Abhibhashan*) or Speech delivered by Surendrnath Sen and published in *Uttara*, Bengali Magazine, ed., Suresh Chandra Chakravarti, pp. 355-56, Varanasi, Magh 1348 (Bengali year).
92. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 23.
93. Anand Krishna, *Purane Banaras ki Jhalkiyan*, Kaushal Kumar Ray, ed., *Uttar Pradesh Kashi Ank*, p. 74.
94. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 460.
95. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
96. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 460.
97. See Chapter IX.
98. See Chapter II.
99. *Hans*, op. cit., p. 42.
100. *Ibid.*
101. *Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mittra, etc.*, pp. 12-13.
102. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 2, Sl no. 294, p. 30, 7 May 1797.
103. COV., Misc. Letters Series 1, Basta 44, Vol. 61, pp. 227-28.
104. COV., Letters by the Agent to Governor-General, Basta I, Vol. 3, p. 39, 2 March 1798.
105. See Ali Ibrahim Khan : Chapter XIX.
106. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 4, Sl no. 24, pp. 189-200, May 1789.
107. See Chapter XIX.
108. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 4, Sl no. 24, pp. 189-200, May 1789.
109. *Ibid.*
110. *Ibid.*
111. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 23.
112. *Private Diary of Warren Hastings*, quoted in Moti Chandra, *Kashi ka Itihas*.
113. Cov., Letters by the Agent to the Governor-General, Basta I.
114. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
115. *Vani*, 'Shati Visheshank'; Tablet placed at the Institution bears his name.
116. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 4, Sl no. 24, pp. 189-200, May 1789.
117. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 24.
118. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 4, Sl no. 24, pp. 189-200, May 1789.
119. See Chapter XIX; COV., Duncan Records, Basta 4, Sl no. 24, pp. 189-200, May 1789.
120. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.

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121. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 23.
122. *Testimonials of Babu Rajendra Mittra, etc.*, p. 16.
123. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 294-96, date of entry : 11 January 1832.
124. *Ibid.*
125. See 'Nana Faḍnavis' in this Chapter.
126. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 294-96.
127. *Ibid.*
128. *Ibid.*
129. Home Dept., (Public) Cons, 1 August 1788, No.3, Address marked 'A'.
130. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 2, Sl no. 294, p. 30, 7 May 1797.
131. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 5, Letter no. 1130, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 350.
132. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 2, Sl no. 294, p. 30, 7 May 1797.
133. See Chapter II.
134. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 1319, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 320.
135. COV., Misc. Letters Series I, Basta 44, Book 6A, p. 69.
136. See Chapter II.
137. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 4, Sl no. 24, pp. 189-200, May 1789.
138. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No 3, Address Marked 'A'.
139. *Ibid.*
140. See House Tax Movement : Chapter XX.
141. *The Private Journal of the Marquis of Hastings*, pp. 66-73, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 377.
142. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 23.
143. J. F. Davis, *Wazir Ali Khan and Massacre of Benares*, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 361; *Hans*, 'Kasi Viseshank', p. 53, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 361.
144. See Chapter II.
145. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 23.
146. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No 3, Address marked 'A'.
147. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 460, 2 December 1837.
148. See Ali Ibrahim Khan : Chapter XIX.
149. *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, 1849.
150. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
151. *Ibid.*
152. Pandey, op. cit., p. 175.
153. Foreign Political, 29 June 1842, No. 6, p. 67.
154. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 1627, received on September 4, 1787.
155. COV., Index to Duncan Records, Basta I, Reg. I, List no. 8, Sl no. 149.
156. Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 319.
157. Valentia, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 75.
158. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 2, Sl no. 379, 4 October 1797, pp. 110-11.

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159. Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 319; Valentia, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 75; *Great Britain Parliamentary Papers*, 3rd part, Vol. IX, 1812-13, op. cit., p. 279.
160. *Ibid.*
161. Valentia, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 70-72.
162. *Ibid.*
163. *Ibid.*
164. *Private Journal of Marquis Hastings*, pp. 66-76, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 376.
165. Eden, op. cit., Vol. I, date of entry in the Diary is 20 November 1837.
166. Valentia, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 70, 72.
167. *Private Journal of Marquis Hastings*, pp. 66-73, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 377.
168. COV., Residency Records, Vol. 4, p. 39, 2 April 1799.
169. *Ibid.*, p. 55, 3 May 1799; Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 319.
170. *Benares Affairs*, Vol. 2, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 319.
171. R. C. Mazumdar and others, *An Advanced History of India*, p. 672.
172. Surendranath Sen, an Address published in *Uttara*, a Bengali Monthly of Varanasi, Magh 1348 (Bengali year).
173. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VIII, No. 485, received on March 27, 1786.
174. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3; Sen, 'An Address' : *Uttara*, op. cit.
175. COV., Duncan Records, Basta No. 4, Sl no. 24, May 1789, pp. 189-200.
176. Sen, 'An Address' : *Uttara*, op. cit.
177. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
178. *Ibid.*
179. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 1194, received on 14 March 1787; Letter no. 1223, received on 21 March 1787.
180. *Ibid.*
181. Home Public, 28 January 1788, No. 5, pp. 536-46.
182. *Ibid.*
183. R. C. Mazumdar and others, *An Advanced History of India*, p. 697.
184. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 3, 2 March 1798, pp. 37-39.
185. Sen, 'An Address' : *Uttara*, op. cit.
186. Foreign Dept., Political, 16 December 1818, Nos. 24-26.
187. *Ibid.*
188. Foreign Political Dept., Proceedings, 3 October 1828, No. 39.
189. Moti Chandra, op. cit., pp. 376-77.
190. Foreign Political, 23 November 1807, No. 72.
191. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. II, date of news : 15 September 1832.
192. *Ibid.*
193. Foreign Political, 23 November 1807, No. 54.
194. Foreign Political, 26 October 1807, Nos. 54-55.
195. Seton-Karr, W. S., *Selections from Calcutta Gazettes*, Vol. V, pp. 15, 16.
196. *Ibid.*

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197. *Ibid.*
198. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 374-75.
199. *Ibid.*
200. House Tax Movement : Chapter XX.
201. *The Private Journals of the Marquis of Hastings*, pp. 66-76, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit.
202. Article on Parvatiya Pandits, *Hans*, op. cit.
203. Heber, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 396.
204. Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 3.
205. R. C. Mazumdar and others, *An Advanced History of India*, p. 615.
206. *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, Register No. 8, 26 June 1821, pp. 472-76.
207. *Ibid.*
208. Proceedings of the Committee for Local Improvement, Minute of James Prinsep, 1 March 1829 : Chapter X.
209. COV., Duncan Records, Basta 16, Vol. 83, p. 353, 22 December 1794.
210. Valentia, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 93, 407-11.
211. *Ibid.*
212. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
213. *Ibid.*
214. *Ibid.*
215. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 1777, received on 22 October 1787.
216. Valentia, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 407-11.
217. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no.1777, received on 22 October 1787.
218. Foreign Political, 29 June 1842, Nos. 5-7.
219. Mrs Colin Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, pp. 23-24.
220. Foreign Political, 29 June 1842, Nos. 5-7.
221. *Ibid.*
222. *Ibid.*
223. *Ibid.*
224. Mackenzie, op. cit., pp. 27, 30-31.
225. A. C. Bose, *Hazrat Wazid Ali Shah, King of Oudh*, p. 66.
226. *Ibid.*
227. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
228. Anandakrishna, *Purane Banaras ki Jhalkiyan*, Kaushal Kumar Ray, ed., *Uttar Pradesh Kashi Ank*, p. 73.
229. R.C. Majumdar and others, op. cit., p. 680.
230. Pandey, op. cit., p. 187.
231. Jadunath Sarvadhikari, *Teerthabhraman*, p. 438; Pandey, op. cit., p. 169.
232. *Ibid.*, p.165; See Sikhism : Chapter VI.
233. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, General Book, Vol. I, Sl. no. 195, p. 160.
234. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 1624, received on 3 September 1787, op. cit.
235. Indore State Records; Vishwanath Narayan Deo, *Devi Shri Ahalya-Bai Holkar—Charitra.*

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236. Foreign Secret Cons., 18 March 1782, No. 2.
237. Duncan Records, Vol. 74, Basta 13, p. 733, 22 March 1794.
238. Ghoshal, op. cit., foot note, p. 261.
239. Foreign Political, 29 October 1858, No. 239, Copy No. 163 of 1856.
240. Valentia, op. cit., p. 80.
241. *Ibid.*
242. *Itihasa Samgraha*, April 1909, pp. 11-72, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., 290.
243. Home Dept., (Public) Cons., 1 August 1788, No. 3, Address marked 'A'.
244. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 6, Letter no. 1784, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 351.
245. *Itihasa Samgraha*, April 1909, pp. 73-74, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit.
246. *Ibid.*
247. Foreign Dept., Political Proceedings, 19 December 1809, No 100, pp.116-18.
248. *Parliamentary Papers*, 3rd Part, Vol. IX, 1812-13, p. 279.
249. *Ibid.*
250. Bandyopadhyay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 24; for details of Panditain, see 'Condition of Women', Chapter V.
251. *Indian Historical Records Commission*, Proceedings 11 (1928), pp. 168-72, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 288.
252. COV., Residency Records, Vol. 3, pp. 103-04, June 1798.
253. *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. 2, pp. 258-59, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit.
254. Letter from Mahadaji Scindhia, No. 580, received on 3 July 1785; *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII; Letter to Mahadaji Scindhia, No. 661, received on 7 September 1786, *ibid*; Letter to Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, No. 662, received on 7 September 1786, *ibid.*
255. Proceedings of the Committee for Local Improvement : Chapter X.
256. Foreign Political, 7 January 1831, No. 5.
257. *Ibid*, 24 July 1834, Nos. 60-61.
258. Ghoshal, op. cit., p. 88, foot note.
259. *Correspondence of Lord Cornwallis*, Vol. I, p. 545, quoted in Moti Chandra, op. cit., p. 324.
260. *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. II, pp. 258-59, *ibid.*, p. 325. Two large houses, one in Bula Nala and another in Brahma Ghat are attributed to the ownership of Nana Fadnavis.
261. Bholanauth Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo*, Vol. I, p. 251.
262. Home Dept., Revenue Branch, 30 May 1836, No. 9, p. 6.
263. Mackenzie, *Six Years in India*, pp. 23 & 31.
264. *Ibid.*
265. *Ibid.*
266. *Ibid.*
267. Chunder, op. cit., p. 251.
268. Tablet in the college-wall bears his name. Later on, the royal family donated the Town Hall, constructed the Maidagin tank, laid out a Public park, etc.
269. See Chapter IV.
270. *Great Britain Parliamentary Papers*, 3rd Part, Vol. IX, 1812-13, p. 279.

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271. COV., Residency Records, Vol. 5, pp. 352-53.
272. *Ibid.*
273. *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, Magistrate to Deputy Magistrate, November 1849.
274. Ghoshal, op. cit., foot note, pp. 17 & 53-54.
275. COV., Duncan Records, Index, List B, Sl no. 468, Basta I, Vol. I.
276. Foreign Dept., Pol. Proceedings, 11 March 1831, No. 8.
277. *Pre-Mutiny Records*, Benares Collectorate, Register 9, p. 446.
278. *Ibid.*, p. 445.
279. *Ibid.*, p. 447. Memorandum received from Major Carpenter, agent to the Governor-General, Benares. It has been mentioned in an article entitled *Parvatiya Pandits* that the Rajguru Ranganath of Nepal was the disciple of Gangaram, the famous Parvatiya pandit of Benares, *Hans*, op. cit.
280. Foreign Dept., Political, 5 September 1838, No. 16.
281. Foreign Dept., Political, 5 December 1833, Nos. 102, 183.
282. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 3, pp. 103-04.
283. *Ibid.*
284. *Ibid.*
285. R. C. Mazumdar and others, op. cit., p. 546.
286. Foreign Political Proceedings, 8 September 1807, No. 6, p. 242.
287. E. B. Havell, *Benares, the Sacred City*, pp. 169-72.
288. Sherring, *Benares*, p. 51.
289. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 3, pp. 103-04, 2 June 1798.
290. *Ibid.*, p. 25, 15 February 1798.
291. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 875, received on 15 November 1786.
292. *Ibid.*
293. Abbe J. A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs, Ceremonies*, pp.334-36.
294. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 3, pp. 103-04, 2 June 1798.
295. *Ibid.*
296. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 1153, received on February 28, 1787, Letter no. 1294, received on April 18, 1787, Letter no. 507, received on April 13, 1786, Letter no. 549, received on May 18, 1786, Letter no. 581, received on July 3, 1786.
297. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 3, p. 37, 2 March 1798.
298. *Ibid.*
299. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Letter no. 489, received on 29 March 1786, Letter no. 550, received on 18 May 1786.
300. Foreign Political, 23 November 1807, No. 72.
301. COV., Basta I, Vol. 2, Sl no. 379, Enclosure, pp. 110-11, 4 October 1797.
302. COV., Residency Records, Basta I, Vol. 2, Sl no. 294, p. 30, 7 May 1797.
303. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. 7, Letter no. 114, received on 29 March 1785.
304. Foreign Political, 23 November 1807, No. 72.
305. COV., Residency Records, Vol. 3, pp. 103-04, 2 June 1798.

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306. Pandey, op. cit., pp. 170-71.
307. V. Raghavan, 'Sanskrit Literature (1700- 1900)', *Journal of the Madras University*, Section A : Centenary Volume, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, January 1957.
308. Pandey, op. cit., p. 217; R. C. Majumdar and others, ed., *Bharatakosha*, Vol. V, p. 448.
309. *Parliamentary Papers*, 3rd Part, Vol. IX, 1812-13, p. 279.
310. Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, Vol. I, pp. 375-79.
311. For instance, Babu Deokinandan Singh had a mistress, see Chapter V.
312. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 336-37.

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CHAPTER XIX

LAW AND ORDER

THE NOVELTY OF BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

In an 1833 petition to W. C. Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, Raja Uditnarain Singh of Varanasi rightly observed : '... it is manifest the British Goverment have a peculiar method of administering justice and prosperity of subjects, which was never before known in the empire of Hindoostan....'[1]

In proceedings of June 25, 1788, Jonathan Duncan, the British Resident of Benares[2], revealed that the British, too, were conscious of the novelty of the administration they had introduced in India. Although systems for the administration of law and justice were not unknown in this land, Raja Uditnarain's observation held much truth. The new administration was strong and firm; prompt and meticulous; alert and persevering; and, yet, full of initiative. It was based on a sound infra-structure, manned by an efficient hierarchy, supported by extensive documentation, and governed by principles of checks, balances, accountability, and above all, 'the rule of law.'

Despite the establishment of the semi-independent Benares Raj in the mid-eighteenth century, the political instability and consequent disturbances during the interregnum of the downfall of the Mughals and the rise of the British adversely affected the administration of the country; and Varanasi was no exception. The Raja of Varanasi was susceptible to political instabilities brought about by the usurpation of his power by the Oudh Nawabs, the Marathas, and finally, the English. Making matters worse, with the passing away of Raja Balwant Singh in 1770, a domestic feud erupted within this royal family. Though Chet Singh successfully established himself as the new Raja, he was never free from anxieties caused by the other claimants to the throne.

Since the foundation of their line, these Hindu kings of Varanasi employed much of their time, energy and money in maintaining their own positions. Unable to establish and run a good and stable administration,

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they were also unable to bring about peace and prosperity in this kingdom.[3] They were more interested in the collection or rather exaction of revenues than in caring for the welfare of their subjects. Consequently, so far as Varanasi was concerned, the officials and subordinates appointed by the Raj to look after the administration of law and justice rendered little service to the people.[4] Anti-social elements gradually got a foothold in the City, worsening the situation. One can imagine the gravity and impact such lawlessness might have on a city such as Varanasi, revered and visited by countless pilgrims and, as a major centre of trade and business, inhabited by a good number of wealthy people.

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE DISRUPTION OF LAW AND ORDER

One of the factors leading to the breakdown of law and order in Varanasi was the establishment of a lawless class during the weak administrations of the later Mughals, that had managed to survive despite the advent of the British administration in 1781.[5] Again, the richness of life in Varanasi was chiefly due to its vast religious heritage, and it was this very tradition that unscrupulous elements of society took advantage of committing all types of mischief.

In the most densely populated quarters of the City, the layout featured wall-to-wall multi-storeyed buildings and innumerable lanes, most of which were dingy, narrow and tortuous.[6] These were also the locations of most of the important temples, and multitudes of devotees in such congested areas sometimes made the place totally inaccessible. This was a source of chaos and confusion that must have been aggravated further during special occasions like solar and lunar eclipses, *Holi* and *Shivaratri*. Moreover, the outskirts of the City, interspersed with large, walled and densely vegetated gardens, were ideal rendezvous spots and hide-outs. The congested nature of the City and these nearby hideouts facilitated anti-social elements in plotting and committing crimes and in escaping detection by the police.[7]

The great concourse of pilgrims who lodged and moved about in these congested areas, would sometimes carry money or jewels for defraying the expenses of the pilgrimage. Most of these people were simple rural folk with little or no knowledge of the locality, its languages, institutions, ways of life, etc. Under these conditions they became easy targets for criminals. If, however, such pilgrimage was undertaken through the guidance of

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professional and honest *pandas*, their protection was vouchsafed; but unfortunately this did not always happen.

With the advent of the British, improvements in administration and transportation resulted in increasing population pressures on Varanasi, thereby affecting its law and order. The City's numerous fairs and festivals attracted hundreds and, at times, even thousands of people with heterogeneous backgrounds from all corners of India, which, in turn, attracted the many criminals that easily mingled with these throngs of visitors, committing crimes and escaping unidentified.

Varanasi was one of the greatest trademarts of India where traders, bankers, chiefs and *zamindars* and/or their agents from different states lived. Hence the pomp and wealth of the City also posed a special attraction for thieves and plunderers of all description.

Religious differences between the Hindus and Muslims sometimes led to animosities which brought about outbreaks of communal rioting. The independent spirit of some of the chiefs, interned in the City with their attendants, and also other chiefs or their agents, especially those from Maharashtra, who would visit Varanasi on pilgrimage with large parties, also created problems for the local administration.[8]

An abundance of abandoned characters, unlawful pastimes like prize-fighting, the existence of gaming houses, inordinate addiction to intoxicants like ganja, bhang and alcohol, the carrying of arms,[9] and the like, were other factors which led to the aggravation of crime in Varanasi.[10]

REPORTS OF THE MAGISTRATES REGARDING LAW AND ORDER

Reports from the Magistrates of Benares about the state of law and order in the City substantiate most of the facts mentioned above. The following extracts from the Magistrate's report of 1835 and 1856 quoted below are examples :

Report of 1835[11]

This City probably is more in need of a good Police than any other in this country; its wealth is probably equalled by none with the exception of Calcutta; it is the place of resort of many natives of high family from all parts of India who come accompanied by numerous retainers, in many instances persons of a lawless character and not accustomed to restraint; it is constantly filled with pilgrims; it is the great depot of money and jewels for many native princes both independent and subject to the British dominion; and its permanent inhabitants are partly made up of the descendants of the numerous tribes and castes which have resorted here from

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every direction; besides, (it) being the residence of many opulent bankers and jewellers, great temptation and opportunities consequently offer themselves to persons subsisting on plunder, whilst its numerous small streets, temples, ghauts, etc., afford many places for their concealment; at the same time affrays frequently occur in consequence of disputes between Moosulmon and Hindoos regarding points of religious ceremonies between the numerous different sects of those religions.

Report of 1856[12]

Benares being a favourite place of pilgrimage and being chosen by many wealthy people as a place of residence for the remainder of their earthly career, necessarily attracts numerous swarms of thieves, for where (else) could they find such wealth, such opportunities of thieving and such easy victims, or where could they find a place where under the cloak of performing a pilgrimage they could so unsuspectingly effect an entrance.... Again, when men of all shades and grades of society and from every part of India find their way to Benares, and when many of these are in appearance highly respectable, the difficulty is increased in discovering the thief from the honest man.

VICTIMS OF CRIMES

The victims of the crimes committed by corrupt pandas were obviously pilgrims, while on occasions like fairs and festivals, both the residents and pilgrims alike were indiscriminately victimized. But pilgrims and visitors had little time or opportunity to lodge complaints in the *thana* or file any suits with the Courts[13] and the miscreants that understood this situation took full advantage of it.[14]

DENS OF CRIMINALS

While some criminals would flock to the City from outside, others were local residents, committing crimes here and possibly elsewhere as well. Most resident criminals lived in the heart of the City itself, while some lived at the outer edges of the Cantonment and Secrole. It was reported on July 8, 1846, that villages and bazars in these areas were full of thieves, house-poisoners, receivers of stolen property and other bad characters.[15] Sometimes they assembled with evil motives in the suburbs consisting of tanks, at places resorted to only on religious occasions, in walled gardens with small bazars and streets in the vicinity, or near Hindu temples or nearby Muslim burial grounds.[16]

WARREN HASTINGS DELIVERS HOOKUMNAMAH

During an earlier visit he paid to the City, Warren Hastings must have observed the state of chaos and confusion here. In 1781, Raja Chet Singh

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was replaced by Mahipnarain Singh on the throne of Varanasi by Hastings, and the administration of the City was taken away from the Raja and placed under the direct control of the Governor-General-in-Council in Calcutta.[17] The chief justification for this act, as Warren Hastings claimed, was due to the City's cosmopolitan, so to say, all-India character.[18] This, according to Hastings, called for protection and management under the supreme authority of British India.

But those who have carefully studied the characters and policies of those British statesmen of India, including Warren Hastings, have reason to suspect that the declared grounds for seizing the administration of the City were neither so simple nor so noble as stated; there were surely other, deeper, self-seeking motives at work. Occupying almost the central position of the British Empire in upper India, the City was strategically important. A favourite and sacred place of resort to Hindus, the City attracted not only the rank and file, but also kings and nobles, including the powerful Rajput and Maratha Chiefs. We have already noted that Daulat Rao Sindhia, the great Maratha chief, had so much love and respect for Varanasi that he had once tried to get possession of it through a mutual agreement with the British, but without success. Hence, any possibility of increased influence of potentially dangerous Hindu chiefs over such a strategic city must have also worried the British imperialists. Moreover, close supervision of the new Varanasi Raja would prevent him from creating any challenges to British paramountcy as had occurred under the deposed Chet Singh. Finally, the great wealth of Varanasi and its potential contributions to British Government revenues must have also prompted the Governor-General to take possession of the City.

Nevertheless, it must also be admitted that Hastings devised a novel arrangement for the administration of the City's law and justice, which was systematic, thorough and a combination of both oriental and occidental systems. He issued a *Hookumnamah* (charter of directives) to all inhabitants, sojourners, pilgrims and others in Varanasi on October 14, 1781. This Hookumnamah described the objectives and other details of the new administration, including the appointment of a *Hakim* (Judge and Magistrate of the City), the establishment of the department of the *Kotwal* (police) and civil and criminal courts, and also chartering the powers, functions and jurisdictions of the Hakim and the courts.[19] This Hookumnamah[20] might be termed the East India Company's 'Royal Proclamation' of its new administration for Varanasi. The most significant extracts read as follows :

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'As it is customary in all large cities that plans should be laid down for the protection of the inhabitants and their property, no such has hitherto been settled for the City of Benares which is a general resort of all castes of men from Hindoostan and the Deccan and not only to be considered with regard to its inhabitants but as a City respected by the whole race of Hindoos. On this account the safety and protection of Benares is to be particularly studied and the Governor-General, by the full powers vested in him by the Governor-General-in-Council, orders and publishes on the part of the Company that for the protection of the inhabitants and the administrations of Justice one man shall be appointed, who shall have full authority over the inhabitants and sojourners in the above City and shall be called Hakim of the City.

It is further enacted that for the administration of his office, 3 departments shall be established. 1st a Kotwal to apprehend persons who may be guilty or accused of crimes as homicide, robbery, theft, or other improper or wicked acts contrary to the safety of the inhabitants which may be committed in the City, and to deliver them over to the *Fozedary Adaulet*.... He shall also prevent (illegible) riot of disorderly people, and may punish them...with not more than 20 strokes of a cane, to enable him to perform which duty certain number of peons receiving mostly wages and wearing badge to distinguish shall be put under him in such number as the Hakim may deem necessary for the business of night-guards and the other duties connected with the *Kotwalee*. He (Kotwal) shall be appointed to his office by the Hakim who shall also have power to dismiss him and his people at pleasure, and the Kotwalee shall remain entirely under his authority.

Secondly, the Fozedary Adaulet to which shall (be) appointed a *Darogah* and 3 *Moulevies* of approved merit and knowledge in the law and in the decision of causes, for the investigation of crimes committed in the City of Benares as above mentioned and the (illegible) and *Futwah* on every cause shall be sent to the Hakim who after examination of it will sign it, deliver it over again to the Darogah and Moulevies whose duty it will be to enforce the order so returned to them. The Darogah and Moulevies shall also be appointed by the Hakim who shall also have power to dismiss them, or to alter or change their forms of processes, he may deem requisite, and it shall be their duty to abide by the forms he may establish.

Thirdly, the *Dewanny Adaulet* to which a Darogah and 3 *Moonsifs* shall be appointed (must be) men of fidelity and abilities from among the inhabitants of Benares for the investigation of and decision of causes of debt, mortgages, settlement of accounts, transfer of property, right of business, disputes of boundaries, questions of marriage, right of inheritance and all other complaints on the subjects of property, ground, money and other articles. In any business unconnected with law, the above Moonsifs shall decide according to the best of their judgement, but in those to which the law can be applied it will be the duty of the Moonsifs after hearing evidences on the cause to ascertain the right to decide agreeable to the *Jakat* or Muhammedan law if the parties are Musulmans, or if the parties should be Hindoos, agreeable to the law of the Hindoos. For the better enabling them to perform this duty 2 Moulevies acquainted with the (Muhammedan) Law and 2 Pundits learned in the (Hindu) Shastras shall be appointed, that in every

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case as above written they should give their Futwah agreeable to the Muhammedan Law and the Hindoo Shastra. It is also ordered that in the case of the Moonsifs' disagreeing in opinion they should separately write their opinion, that it may be seen on what sides the majority, according to which the order may be given, but in the case of their being equal the Darogah's opinion is determinative. Every cause not exceeding a thousand Rupees shall be considered finally decreed by the Adaulet, but in causes above this if the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Adaulet he may appeal to the Hakim within a month of the decision and not afterwards, and the Hakim is authorized to decide upon the cause either upon the sanction given by the Adaulet, or to institute his enquiries anew. If the complainant brings new witnesses it will be the Hakim's duty to hear their depositions; if the complainant produces sufficient reasons for not having before brought them forward, the Hakim being authorized to decide upon the decree of the Adaulet; his decision will remain fixed and permanent. It is also ordered that the Hakim, the Darogah and Moonsifs should keep a daily accounts of the proceedings of their Adaulet to remain upon record in the *Dafturs*. The Darogah and Moonsifs shall also be appointed by the Hakim who shall have power to remove them, and to settle or alter the forms of process in their Court and it shall be their duty to abide by the forms he shall establish.

It is also ordered that the above Hakim shall monthly transmit to the Governor-General-in-Council at Calcutta, copies of the papers of all the proceedings, statements of the people who may have been appointed to or dismissed from office, new orders which may have been issued or new forms prescribed for the proceedings of the Dewanny, Fozedary Adaulets, and every other paper which he may think necessary respecting the affairs of the City and his own office and that he shall obey and fulfil all orders sent by the Governor-General-in-Council. Although the authority of the Hakim extends only to the limits of the City of Benares, yet to prevent the inconveniences which might occur from the escape of criminals to other places, it is further ordered that the Hakim and his people shall have authority to send a *Perwannah* and his seal for any criminal who may have committed a crime in the city of Benares and escaped out of its limits, and having laid hold of him deliver him over to the Adaulets.... It is consequently ordered that all *Zemindars*, *Amils* and other people in authority throughout the district shall be assisting the people of the Hakim in laying hold of criminals who may have escaped into their respective quarters. It is also allowed to the officer of both the Adaulets to enjoin the attendance of witnesses who may live beyond their jurisdiction, when they may consider their evidence essential.'[21]

It is evident from the above that the appointment of the Hakim, or Magistrate and Judge of Benares, was designed as the key-post of the administration of the City and it was, as it were, the pivot-point upon which the whole machinery of this administration would revolve. What is most remarkable is that the Hakim would be accountable only and directly to the Governor-General-in-Council in Calcutta.

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To give effect to Hastings' Hookumnamah, a new establishment of courts and police manned by suitable personnel was set up; moreover, a total expenditure of Rs. 8136-0-0 per month was ordered as follows :[22]

Monthly Expenditures for the New Administrative and Judicial Establishments

Fozedary Adalat	Rs. 1,445 - x - x
Dewany Adalat	Rs. 2,117 - 8 - x
Kotwali	Rs. 1,273 - 8 - x
Hakim Ali Ibrahim Khan	Rs. 2,500 - x - x
Naib of Ali Ibrahim Khan	Rs. 400 - x - x
Vakil of Ali Ibrahim Khan	Rs. 400 - x - x
Total	Rs. 8,136 - x - x

Monthly Expenditures for the Dewany Adalat[23]

Darogah	Rahmutulla Khan	Rs. 500 per month.
1st Munsif	Moulavy Wasil Ali Khan	Rs. 250 per month.
(After his death, his son Abdul Kader Khan)		
2nd Munsif	Abdur Rashid Khan	Rs. 250 per month.
3rd Munsif	Zaffer Ali	Rs. 250 per month.

ALI IBRAHIM KHAN, THE FIRST INDIAN MAGISTRATE UNDER THE BRITISH

In view of the enormous power and responsibility that the newly created position of Hakim involved, it could not have been an easy task to choose the right man for the post. It was made all the more difficult with the Government's decision to select this Hakim from among its Indian subjects; for the candidate would not only need the prerequisite qualifications and respectable background, but must also be someone loyal to the British Government. The man was finally found in the person of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, once a minister to the deposed Nawab of Bengal, Mir Kasim Khan. That Warren Hastings had shown rare wisdom in recruiting Ali Ibrahim became evident soon after his appointment.

Ali Ibrahim Khan's appointment and the Hookumnamah were both declared on the same day, October 14, 1781. Nasiruddin Ali Khan, one of Ibrahim's four sons, was appointed as a City Judge. It was also arranged that Ibrahim would also get the assistance of troops, if required, to carry out his duties.[24] As shown in the chart above, he was to draw a monthly salary of Rs. 2500 for his services, which though quite large, was

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completely justified in view of the high degree of initiative and responsibility he was expected to shoulder.[25]

In accordance with the terms of the Hookumnamah, Ibrahim was placed directly under the control of the Governor-General-in-Council at Calcutta. Nevertheless, the local British Resident kept a vigilant eye on the workings of this new administration of the City.[26] At the time of Ibrahim's appointment, Grant was the British Resident, a post he continued until he was replaced in 1788 by Jonathan Duncan. Ibrahim once stated that Duncan was very friendly to him and that the latter had attended to all his inquiries. On the other hand, Duncan himself reported on one occasion that Ibrahim had an independent spirit and was jealous of any interference in his work by the Resident.

Now let us discuss how this newly-introduced City administration functioned until 1795, when a fundamental change was implemented and the Indian Magistrate was replaced by a European.[27]

Judging from the state of affairs reigning in Varanasi just prior to Ibrahim's appointment, one can only imagine how monumental and complicated the task of restoring law and order must have been. Ibrahim did not falter and rose to the occasion by taking all steps necessary to deal with the situation squarely. Ibrahim himself left a detailed account in his letters written in Persian and addressed to the Government headquarters at Calcutta,* describing the troubles he had to face and how he tackled them.

Under his magistracy a new pattern of city administration began to take shape. He made certain declarations regarding the functioning of the courts, both civil and criminal, and also that of the Kotwali. He appointed the staff for his own office, including the *Naeb* and *Vakil*, and also those of the offices under him. It appears that those who held these high posts under him were all recruited from among Muslims, except, of course, the court-pandits, who were obviously Hindus. These recruits of his own choosing were homogenous in many respects and they worked as a diligent team, offering him their full co-operation and assistance. Ibrahim also maintained strict religious neutrality in matters of city administration. All this helped him considerably in accomplishing the uphill task that lay

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* *Khutoot-e-Ali Ibrahim Khan* (Unpublished letters of Ali Ibrahim), preserved in the Khuda Bakhsh Archives, Patna : Shayesta Khan, *A Biography of Ali Ibrahim Khan*, pp. 136-37.

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before him; that of implementing a new order, one that would be largely followed in the administration of the City in years to come.

IBRAHIM'S INSTRUCTION TO THE KOTWAL

After appointing Nazim Beg as Kotwal of the City, the Hakim gave him directions with regard to the functioning of the Kotwali. These include the following :[28]

> 'Kotwalee people must perform their duty with fidelity and propriety and never in the smallest degree shall be slack in the case of their attention to the safety and security of the City and its environs. They must use their utmost endeavours to keep watch over and confine all thieves, house-breakers, robbers and murderers and send them to the officers of the Fozedary Adaulet who, after investigation of their crimes, will punish them in the way agreeable to the instructions they have received for that purpose. They must also use their endeavours to prevent all disturbances and quarrels of riotous and disorderly people and they are authorized to quell disturbances of this nature by inflicting a few strokes of the *Tazianah* on those who may deserve this punishment.
>
> It is also necessary that they should give the strictest injunction to the *chokidars* of each quarter of the City to pay the greatest attention to the guard of their respected quarters and give immediate information of anything that happens to the Kotwal.'

Ibrahim further stated that the Kotwal was to get daily reports of events from the different *mahallas* and immediately take the precautions suited to the situation.[29] The Kotwal must also, in the case of theft, housebreaking, or burglary, take whatever actions necessary to catch the perpetrators and send them to the Fozedary Adalat to receive adequate punishment. Should someone be apprehended on suspicion of murder, robbery or theft, when the *cuchery* of the Adalat was sitting, the suspect should be immediately presented before them; and if the cuchery should not be sitting, suspects were to be confined in jail till the next day and carried under guard before the cuchery. When and if the court-judge declared them not guilty, they would then be released. If someone should be suspected of stealing small amounts of paddy, or intentionally releasing bullocks or sheep to feed in another's grain fields, after enquiry and some remonstration, he was to be released.

It was also necessary that the Kotwal, his deputies and others under him in no way distress or oppress the inhabitants, travellers or others in the City. They were to neither demand nor receive the smallest amount from anyone, either in cash or in kind, by way of penalty, reward, bribe, or otherwise, either with or without the consent of the persons involved.

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Should goods—as property of thieves or robbers—be seized, a correctly itemized list of these possessions was to be sent to the officers of the Fozedary Adalat without delay, who would either confiscate or release the items after informing the Magistrate of the circumstances.

Should a thief, murderer or robber escape from the jurisdiction of the City, the Magistrate was to be immediately informed of the circumstances so that he may take the necessary steps for the culprit's apprehension.

The Kotwal was to avoid any interference with the business of the Dewany Adalat and punish any servants (employees) under the Kotwali who may be found faulty or may have acted contrary to prescribed regulations. Should an employee deserve to be dismissed, information relating to the dismissal was to be given to the Magistrate.

The Kotwal was to keep securities, the *muchulekah* and receipts for the monthly wages of subordinates in the designated form, and the wages of each was to be given conformable to the amounts so noted. These papers were to be delivered immediately to the *duftur*.

The Kotwal was also to avoid any interference with the collection of ground rents, duties on merchandize and the bazar or other duties, nor was the Kotwal to interfere with the regulations of the bazar, or the transacting of commissions, which were all under the jurisdiction of the *Ameeny* Department.

It is evident from these instructions that while elaborating on the workings and duties of the Kotwal and his staff, Ibrahim also laid down a code of conduct, particularly warning them against committing any excesses of authority or acts of corruption.

PHATAKBANDI SYSTEM AND LAW AND ORDER

During this period there were many quarters in the City where the Phatakbandi System still prevailed. This system was a highly effective means of maintaining law and order, especially in congested areas of the City. Suffice it to note here that the phatak guards in some quarters were appointed by the inhabitants themselves, while in other cases, such appointments were made by the Kotwali. In either case, however, these guards were paid by the citizens residing within a given phatak. Later on, one Darogah was appointed to look after this Phatakbandi System.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE: THE DEWANY ADALAT[30]

Ali Ibrahim ordered the following process to be followed in cases

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brought before the Dewany Adalat and also set forth a code of conduct for employees as per the Governor-General's Hookumnamah. Notification of the following order was effected by posting a copy on the door of the cuchery and also by advertising it throughout the City :

> 'The Darogah, Moulavies, Moonsifs, Pundits, Peshkar, Moonsyis, Mohurrers and other officers of the Dewany Adalat, being collected together on the cuchery of the Adalat, should attend to the investigation of complaints as might be brought before them. These complaints must be regarding debts, bills of sales, mortgages, settling accounts, transfer of property, right of vicinage, disputes of boundaries, rights of inheritance, rights of marriage, questions of caste, and other complaints relating to property, ground, money and other articles which might have reference to the Dewany Adalat.
>
> No complaints of over 12 years standing are to be heard here unless the plaintiff should bring proof of his having been in minority, or having undertaken a long journey. When the plaintiff appears in court, he is to give an *ekraurnamah* stating that if he should fail in his attendance on the court without sufficient reason, his complaints should be considered of no avail.
>
> When the defendant attends the Court on summons, responsible security must be taken for him.
>
> If the plaintiff and defendant bring their vakeels with them, the *vakalatnamah* should be signed or sealed by the constituting parties and the Kazi's seal offered to them, and after this being delivered to the Adalat, the cause might be carried on through the Vakeels thus nominated.
>
> If both plaintiff and defendant should agree to settle their dispute by arbitration, the name of the arbitrators appointed by both parties shall be inserted in an *ekraurnamah* and the cause given over for their decision, whatever their decision might be. A statement under the signatures of the arbitrators shall be lodged in the *daftur* of the decision carried into execution.
>
> In causes when the evidence of witness is necessary, they are to be heard upon their oath on the Koran or on water of the Ganges.
>
> If after the decision on the cause, the defendant does not discharge the amount awarded to the complainant, he should be enjoined to do so or imprisoned and the amount paid from his effects.'

It was also directed that no Darogah, Maulavi, Munsif, Pandit or other officer of the Adalat would settle any business of complaints in their own houses, and that all business which came before them should be investigated in the *cuchery* and acted upon faithfully and religiously.

A statement of the causes decided upon—having been prepared with the *futwah* of the Maulavies or the decision of the Munsifs and Pandits included therein, and having the seal of the officers of the court and the Hakim's signature affixed thereto—would be delivered over to the *Serishtadar*, where a statement of all decisions was to be entered monthly

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in the 'Bye' (Book) and sent with a list to the Governor-General-in-Council in Calcutta.

It was also necessary that none of the officers of the Adalat, as servants of the Government, should receive the smallest amount by way of ransom, bribe, award, *talab*, consideration for service, or in any other manner, or under any pretence whatsoever, and that none of the parties in litigation should give anything to any of the employees of the Adalat. Should Adalat officers demand or receive anything from anyone forcibly, the person thus aggrieved was to notify the Darogah of the Adalat so that he might punish the offender and prevent him from repeating such act. If, notwithstanding this injunction, any of the Adalat's officers should demand and receive something, both the litigant and the officer involved would be considered liable for punishment by the Government. The Darogah was also directed to give the strictest injunction to the people under him on this matter. Anyone caught violating this edict was to be confined and all information regarding the circumstances of the infraction given to the Hakim.

In every proceeding under the jurisdiction of the Fozedary Adalat, such as those resulting in the imposition of the death penalty, the cutting off of limbs and other severe punishments, or penalties for assault, whoredom, abuse, or in matters concerning marriage disputes, it was directed that the Dewany Adalat should not interfere. Further, if any person was found to have brought a false complaint or to have given false evidence, the offender, after enquiry and proof, would be delivered over to the Fozedary Adalat to be appropriately punished.

Ali Ibrahim Khan published a second set of regulations giving further details with regard to cases in the Dewany Adalat on December 14, 1781.[31] Important clauses therein which dealt with cases regarding Hindus and Muslims follow :

In cases where the parties were Hindus, the verdict should be agreeable with Hindu Shastras by the decision of the Pandits, who would then sign the decision and identify the *Sphotic* (Book of Law) from which their opinion was taken.

In cases of both parties being Hindus, yet wishing to have their cause decided by Mohammedan Law, a *razynamah* was to be obtained from court-Maulavis and the cause decided accordingly. If one party should be a Hindu and the other a Muslim, the case would be decided in a way agreeable to former customs of Varanasi, by Mohammedan Law. In cases

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regarding business interests between a Hindu and Mussalman, a decision would be given agreeable to the customs of the country. If both parties were Hindus and one should elect that the case be decided by Mohammedan Law, while the other opted for settlement under Hindu Shastras, the matter would be adjudged according to the Shastras.

THE FOZEDARY ADALAT

Ali Ibrahim issued another form of process to be followed in the Fozedary Adalat along the same lines with minor, relevant changes, which was set up and issued by him in the case of Dewany Adalat on December 14, 1781.[32]

TRIAL BY COURTS

The newly introduced systems for the administration of justice, becoming more formal and methodical, gave birth to suspicions in the minds of the local people. The initial reaction of the people in this regard is best described by Jonathan Duncan in a letter of 1788, which reflects on the old system of judicature prevalent in the City. Duncan writes:

> '... in this country the inhabitants have been so long habituated to settle all disputes to what they call the mutual satisfaction of both parties.... The Resident was persuaded (that the old system was) more decisive and what they (the inhabitants) would think (with regard to the new system) is an abrupt mode of administering justice and exempting decisions so passed, merely upon the proofs exhibitant within a certain and fixed time perhaps, by only one of the parties, would not suit the way of thinking of the majority of the inhabitants of Benares'.

But this initial reservation of the people against the British court was giving way to a growing faith in the system as more inhabitants sought redress of grievances through the courts. This has been exemplified by the fact that quite a good number of suits were instituted in both the civil and criminal courts. It happened on one occasion that a number of civil suits got piled up in the Dewany Adalat and Ibrahim Ali directed the Fozedary Adalat to adjudicate some of these both to reduce the case load of the Dewany Adalat and to hasten the process of justice.

The following tables of prisoners (which will be followed by detailed reports of a few crimes committed in the City and judged in the Courts) will throw light on both the condition of law and order in the City as well as on the working of the Kotwali, that is, the police administration and the Courts established by the British. It should be noted that most of the cases mentioned below were of a Fozedary nature.

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TABLES OF PRISONERS : THEIR PUNISHMENT BY THE COURT[33]

Table 1

Name of the Prisoner	Name of the Prisoner's father	Caste	Age	Place of residence	Crime	Date of Commit-ment	Date of the order of the Governor-General-in-Council condeming the party to perpetual imprisonment
Ram Jeewan	Sonaeet Misra	Brahmin	27	Varanasi	Killing his Wife	21 May 1787	11 Nov. 1789
Dhooman	Munsaram	Zurgur	25	City	Killing Bhowanny, a Gangaputra	17 June 1789	25 Mar. 1791
Rameshwar Prasad	Oudh Raj	Baad farosh	30	Bhelupura	Killing two travellers - names unknown	2 Feb. 1792	30 Nov. 1792
Shee Bucksh	Derrew Singh	Rajpoot	50	City	Killing two travellers - names unknown	2 Feb. 1792	30 Nov. 1792
Beekchuk	Bussunt Singh	Rajpoot	25	Oudh— a ward of the City	Killing two travellers - names unknown	2 Feb. 1792	30 Nov. 1792

N.B. Award of serious punishments like life-imprisonment, transportation for life, death-sentences needed the ratification of the Governor-General-in-Council.

Table 2[34]

Name of the Prisoner	Name of the Prisoner's father	Caste	Age	Place of residence	Crime	Date of Commit-ment	Date of the order of the Government
Sheona	Sardar Singh	Zuyree	25	Bhelupoora	Theft	25 May 1794	6 June 1794
Adheem	Ramnathore	Rajpoot	27	Jetpura, a ward of the City	Theft and habitual theft	30 March 1794	6 June 1794

N.B. The above-mentioned two persons who were condemned as notorious professed thieves were given 3 years' transportation to the

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Andamans by order of the Governor-General-in-Council on June 6, 1794.

CASE STUDIES

The details of some cases brought before the courts are given below:

The Murder of Akbar Ali[35]

Punnah, the wife of one Muhammad Akbar, who was a chandler and an inhabitant of the City, presented a petition in 1794 to the Resident on the subject of Bhicky Roy. Bhicky, a Rajput, having wounded her husband then took his sword and shield to the house of one Mina Bai, a resident of the same neighbourhood.

In the petition, Punnah submitted that Muhammad Akbar, her husband, was a poor and peaceable man whose occupation was making candles. She stated that he never quarrelled with any person and the whole town knew of his inoffensive disposition. But the people in that street were Rajput Hindus, and because a mosque had been built in the locality and prayers were publicly said there, they had made a practice of standing opposite and blowing a conch shell, throwing stones and shouting abusive language. When a complaint was made to the City Adalat, the Judge of the Adalat severely reprimanded the Rajputs, took penal bonds from them and obliged them to discontinue this molestation. Accordingly, they ceased their insults publicly, but every now and then continued to throw stones at the time of the public prayers. Punnah contended that they were also plotting and contriving the murder of Akbar.

One day, the man named Bhicky, came out of the house belonging to said Mina Bai with a drawn sword, and gave Akbar Ali, who was standing with *hooka* in hand, seven successive strokes of the blade, so that his left hand was cut to the bone and almost severed, and he also received two wounds on the right hand. While Bhicky was giving him these strokes with the sword, he muttered the words, 'If you utter that prayer again, you will be called to account for it.' After this Bhicky set off to the house of Mina Bai who helped him to escape.

On the basis of this complaint lodged by Punnah, Bhicky was summoned into the Adalat on April 21,1794, and interrogated. In reply, Bhicky stated that he had eaten nothing for eight days and at the end of that time drank some *bhang*, becoming greatly intoxicated. In that state of intoxication, after giving Muhammad Akbar some strokes and some wounds he had run away, making his escape.

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The Court asked him how he could say that he was intoxicated seeing he had not struck any person other than Muhammad Akbar; and seeing that he had fled the City to where he had a garden without losing his way; and seeing that he also remembered all that had happened in the assault on Muhammad Akbar. To these points, Bhicky could not give a satisfactory answer and confessed nothing except what he had already mentioned in his statement.

The Court asked Punnah, 'What compensation do you desire for the blood of Muhammad Akbar ?'

Punnah replied, 'To compensate for the blood of my husband, I desire the blood of Bhicky, the murderer.'

Then the Court suggested, 'If you desire it, Bhicky will be compelled to make you a pecuniary compensation.'

Punnah was uncompromising saying, 'I will never sell blood, or desire to have the price of blood.' She then insisted, 'It is my desire that the blood of Bhicky be the price of the blood of Muhammad Akbar.'

The Court having considered the proceedings, resolved that the death sentence be passed and immediately carried into execution, that he, Bhicky, accordingly, be hanged by the neck until he was dead.

The Case of Four Thieves[36]

Four thieves named Mulood, Budloo, Jingwa (Bhingooa ?), and Omrah assembled at the Chowk, the public market-place, sometime in 1795. There was a great concourse of people there at that time and among whom were these four thieves. They were arrested and brought before the Court for trial. Their interrogation by the Court and the confessions they made, which are quoted below, throw light on their backgrounds and other details of their lives.

On being addressed by the Court, one thief, named Mulood, confessed, 'Since the beginning of the Adalat's establishment I have been brought here often. The first time my nose and ear were cut off (on account of theft) and I was branded on the forehead...the mark is now gone'. The Court asked why, after he had been thus punished and had promised by *muchlekah* to quit the City, had he remained. Mulood replied, 'Except in the City, I have no place to go to for my sustenance ... on that account I stayed here.'

On being asked by the Court, another suspect, Budloo said, 'I have been brought twice before the Adalat for theft. My nose and ear were also

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cut off and since that time I have not commited theft, but have earned a subsistence by begging.'

On being interrogated, the third convict, Jingwa, replied to the Court, 'I have been brought before the Adalat nine times for theft. I was punished and after having entered into a *muchlekah*, I was set free.' The Court asked why he had then remained in the City. The prisoner simply admitted, 'I am at fault.'

The fourth thief, Omrah, also confessed that he had already been brought before the Court seven times on the charges of theft and punished on that account and then set free. He also admitted that he had committed a wrong in staying at the City, though he had been otherwise instructed by the Court.

A Case of Kleptomania[37]

A female thief, named Luchmuneah, was arrested sometime in 1794 and on being interrogated by the Court she submitted the following statement :

'I do not recollect how often (I committed theft) but it must be twenty times, on which occasions I received stripes (flogging) with a rattan.... I have entered into repeated *muchlekahs* to quit the town. Indeed, I, twice by the order of Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, was sent as far as Allahabad and Patna, from whence I returned to Varanasi and committed petty thefts and was apprehended and brought before the courts. And for an offence of like nature about three months ago, I, by the Resident's order, received stripes and gave a *muchlekah* to quit the City on which I was released.... But I cannot give up stealing and I cannot rest without stealing. I am helpless.'

A sympathetic study of this confession from Luchmuneah suggests that a convict suffering from a psychological disease of habitual thieving perhaps deserved more reformation and rehabilitation than rigorous punishment. However, the Court, having observed that Lunchmuneah was an incorrigible and notorious thief found her a proper candidate to be transported to the Andamans, provided the Government agreed to it. In reply, the Governor-General-in-Council ordered that as they did not think it advisable at present to transport women to the Andamans, Luchmuneah should be confined for life.

The Death of Kangaly[38]

On June 4, 1794, Dunnea, the widow of one Kangaly, an agricultural

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field labourer, alleged that her deceased husband had been employed five years as a servant in cultivating the fields of one Bukhsh Khan, an Afghan. When the cultivating season was commencing Kangaly absconded from Bukhsh Khan, his master, for two months. When the cultivation season was over, Kangaly returned home and was found to be extremely reduced and weak. In reply to the query made by Dunnea, his wife, he simply said that he had been afflicted with asthma.

Then Kangaly went to Bukhsh Khan, his master, to meet him. Owing to his absconding, Bukhsh alleged that he had suffered a loss in cultivation (although Dunnea worked on behalf of her husband as much as possible), and then being very much enraged he struck Kangaly with his open hand on the cheek and on his leg with his fist.

Dunnea was not, of course, present when her husband received these blows, but two hours after the beating, Kangaly collapsed. Dunnea frankly told the Court, 'I know not whether my husband's death was occasioned by the blows he received or by the illness he then laboured under.'

The Court then asked Kangaly's brother and Dunnea, whether they wanted any compensation for the death, but they replied in the negative and pardoned the alleged attacker; hence, the Court also pardoned him.

REMARKS ON COURTS

The above reports exemplify how justice was scrupulously administered and how cases were tried quickly and without unnecessary procedural delays. The court proceedings were sent regularly to the Governor-General-in-Council for his comments and confirmation as per the Hookumnamah instructions, thus supervising the local administration. Crimes and offences of a grave nature were seriously dealt with and penalties ranging from deportation to the Andamans and life imprisonment to capital punishment were handed down. Moreover, brutal punishments such as mutilation of limbs, ears and nose, and such mediaeval modes of punishment, were also awarded by the courts under the British. There are also instances on record wherein the Court pardoned offenders on grounds of insufficient evidence and benefit of doubt.

It also appears from the tables of prisoners furnished above, that even a nearly decade from the establishment of stricter law enforcement and the systematic awarding of severe punishments, the murdering of travellers, meaning pilgrim homicides, did not cease altogether. Nevertheless, the prompt arrest and execution of the offenders must have had some impact

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on potential criminals, creating a more peaceful and secure environment than had prevailed in the City in recent years.

Every development that followed the establishment of the new systems of law and justice was however not good and beneficial, nor could it be so. Paradoxically enough, the very courts that were set up to provide some restraint against crime and protection for the populace, were also responsible for breeding new crimes like the forgery of documents, the giving of false evidence, the bribing of court officials etc. It appears that one of the most prevalent crimes was that of giving false evidence, as according to an unofficial census of the City in 1801, the number of persons listed as living on payments for giving false evidence may have totalled as many as four hundred. Furthermore, on one occasion even the integrity of a judge was questioned when it was alleged that he was in the obnoxious habit of taking bribes and *nuzurs* from parties in lawsuits, the details of which will be given later.

THE COURTS REFER CASES TO THE PANDITS

It has already been stated that most of the court cases in which the Hindus were involved were tried by the Hindu Shastras. Although there were court-pandits for necessary consultation of Hindu law, complicated and confusing cases were referred to the illustrious pandits of the City. For example, the following questions and replies were referred by the Court to Pandit Kashinath, the first Principal of the Benares Sanskrit College :

Question 1 : Between the caste or denominations of Brahmin and Mahabrahmin, what difference is there in the country ?

Answer : In former times, there being sundry Brahmins, who, from civility after *dana* or acquirement, took all kinds of things that were given at the funeral ceremonies of deceased persons of all castes, and which is declared improper by the Shastras. Therefore, such Brahmins were debarred from officiating at these ceremonies in the case of Brahmins (clients), and other Brahmins discontinued to sit with or to eat and drink with the former who, consequently, became of separate and distinct class called Mahabrahmin—but they are still of the caste of Brahmin.

Question 2 : If one Mahabrahmin kills another Mahabrahmin, is it proper to put the murdering Mahabrahmin to death, or if it be not, what punishment falls to him?

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Answer: The.Shastras do not allow a Brahmin to be put to death for murder, but such a Brahmin's punishment consists in having his head shaved and having the figure of a man without a head drawn in black on his forehead and in being expelled from the country, or in having ... his goods and property confiscated and being expelled from the country.[39]

TRIAL BY ORDEAL : NATIVE DEVICES OF JUSTICE

On certain occasions, disputes were settled through ordeals, provided both parties were Hindus and both agreed to this procedure. This mode of trial or settlement of cases was also sanctioned by the Hindu Shastras. Modes of trying offenders by an appeal to the Deity have been described in detail in the *Mitakshara*, in the chapter on Oaths, and also other books of Hindu law.[40]

The *divya* in Sanskrit, signifies the same as *pariksha* in Hindi, *kasm* in Arabic and *saugand* in Persian : that is, an oath or a form of involving the Supreme Being to attest to the truth of an allegation; but it is generally understood to mean trial by ordeal, or a form of appealing to the immediate interposition of the Divine Power.[41] Such trials could be conducted in one of nine ways; for example, by balance, by fire, by the water in which an idol has been washed, by rice, by boiling oil, by red hot iron or by images.

TRIAL BY ORDEAL : CASE STUDIES

Trial by red-hot iron[42]

In the year 1783, a man was tried by hot iron ball in the presence of Magistrate Ali Ibrahim Khan. A man who had been accused of theft pleaded not guilty. As the theft could not be proved by legal evidences, a trial by hot iron ball ordeal was tendered to the accuser and was accepted by him. The Magistrate advised the judges and pandits to prevent decision of the question by a mode not conformable to the practice of the Government and recommended an oath by water of the Ganges and leaves of *Tulasi* in a little brass vessel, or by the book *Harivamsha* (Purana), or the sacred stone of *Shalagram*, etc., all oaths of which were used at Varanasi. But as the parties obstinately refused to try the issue by any one of the modes recommended by the Magistrate and insisted on a trial by red-hot iron ball, the judges and the pandits of the Court were ordered to gratify their wishes and to set aside those forms of trial introduced by the

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Government. It was after a mature deliberation for four months that a regular mandate was issued for a trial of the case by red-hot iron ball.

The Magistrate wrote that he accorded his permission for the same for the four following reasons : First, because there was no other way of condemning or absolving the person accused; secondly, because both parties were Hindus, and this mode of trial was especially recommended in the Dharma Shastra by the ancient law givers; thirdly, because this ordeal was practised in the dominion of the Hindu Rajas; and finally, because it might be useful to inquire as to how it was possible for the heat of fire to be resisted and for the hand that held it to avoid being burnt.

An order was accordingly sent to the pandits of the Court and of Varanasi to the effect that since the parties accusing and accused were both Hindus, and would not consent to any trial but that of the hot ball, the ordeal be duly performed in the manner prescribed by the *Mitakshara*.

When preparations were made, the Magistrate, attended by all the learned pandits and officers of the Court, the *sipahis* of Captain Hogan's battalion, and many inhabitants of the City, went to the site. The Magistrate again tried to dissuade the accuser from requiring the accused to be tried by fire, adding, 'if his hand be not burned, you shall certainly be imprisoned.' The accuser, not deterred by this threat, persisted that the ordeal be carried out. The ceremony was then conducted in the presence of all who had assembled to witness the ordeal in the following manner :

The pandits of the Court and the City, having worshipped Ganesha, the god of knowledge, and having presented oblations of clarified butter to the fire, formed nine circles of cow-dung on the ground. Then they having bathed the accused in the Ganga, brought him with his clothes and, to remove all suspicion of deceit, washed his hands with pure water. Then having written the state of the case and the words of the 'mantra' on a palmyra leaf, they tied it on his head, and put into his hands, which they opened and joined together, seven leaves of pippal, seven of jend (?), seven blades of *darbha* grass, a few flowers and some barley moistened with curds. These they fastened with seven threads of raw white cotton.

After this, they made the iron ball red-hot and, taking it up with tongs, placed it in his hands. He walked with it, step by step, the space of three *gaz* (yard) and a half, through each of the seven intermediate rings, and threw the ball into the ninth, where it burnt the grass that had been left in it. To prove his veracity, he next rubbed some rice in the husk between his

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hands, which were afterwards examined, and were so far from being burned, that not even a blister was raised on either of them.

Since it is the nature of fire to burn, the officers of the Court, and people of the locality, nearly five hundred of whom had attended, were astonished. Magistrate Ibrahim himself commented that he 'was perfectly amazed' at the sight of this event. However, it occurred to his 'weak apprehension' that probably the fresh leaves and other things placed in the hands of the accused had prevented their being burned, besides that, the time was but short between his taking the ball and throwing it down. But as it has been positively declared in the Dharma Shastra and in the written opinions of the most respectable pandits that the hand of a man who speaks the truth cannot be burned, and as the Magistrate and many others had seen with their very own eyes that the hands of the accused were unhurt by the fire, he was consequently discharged.

Trial by hot oil[43]

A Brahmin, named Rishishwara Bhatta, accused one Ramdayal, a liner painter, of having stolen his goods. Ramdayal pleaded not guilty, and after much altercation, consented to be tried, as it had been proposed, by the ordeal of a vessel of hot oil. In this case too, Ali Ibrahim advised the pandits of the Court to prevent that mode of trial if possible, but since the parties insisted, an ordeal by hot oil, according to the Shastra, was awarded for the same reasons mentioned in the previous ordeal. The pandits, who assisted the Judge at the ceremony were Bhishma Bhatta, Nana Pathak, Maniram Pathak, Maniram Bhatta, Shiva, Anantaram Bhatta, Kriparam, Vishnuhari, Krishnachandra, Ramendra, Govindaram, Harikrishna Bhatta and Kalidas. The three last noted here were the pandits of the Court. When Ganesha had been worshipped and the *homa* was performed, according to the Shastra, they sent for the Magistrate. He, attended by the two Daroghas of the Dewany and Fozedary Courts, the Kotwal of the town, other officers of the court, and many inhabitants of the City went to witness the ordeal. There, as in the previous case, Ibrahim again attempted to dissuade Ramdayal and his father from submitting to the ordeal and apprized them that should his hand be burned, he would be compelled to pay the value of the goods stolen and his character would be disgraced.

But as Ramadyal would not desist, he thrust his hand into the vessel with hot oil and was burned. The opinion of the pandits was then taken,

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and they were unanimous that Ramdayal's guilt had been established. He was then bound to pay Rishiswara Bhatta the price of what he had stolen and if the sum was to exceed five hundrd *ashrafi* his hand was to be amputated by an express law in the Shastras and a fine imposed according to his circumstances.

Ramdayal was forced to pay Rishiswara seven hundred rupees as recompense for the goods which had been stolen, but, since leniency in such cases was not usual in the Courts of Varanasi, the Magistrate ordered that the fine be paid and the prisoner discharged.

Instances of trial by ordeal decreased considerably with the establishment of Courts in 1781 and gradually became a totally obsolete mode of determining guilt or innocence.

LOCAL MODES OF REDRESSING GRIEVANCES

Along with local modes of trial, there were also local modes of seeking redress of an offence or of fulfilling a prayer (which were also sanctioned by the laws and customs of the land) which involved mental and physical torture. The following were some of the different modes of redress :

Self-lacerating and wounding : The system of self-lacerating and wounding was common among the Brahmins of the locality for expressing one's personal disgust, passions or ideas regarding policy.[44]

Erection of a *koor* : Erecting a *koor* meant preparing a circular stack of wood for conflagration. Sometimes a cow and sometimes even an old woman—generally a relative of the aggrieved party—was placed upon the pile and the whole thing was consumed together. The object of this practice was to intimidate officers of the Government or other alleged wrongdoers about the importunate demands of the party. The effect of the sacrifice was to inflict great sin upon those guilty of forcing the aggrieved party into such recourse.[45]

Dhurna or sit-down strike : The *dhurna* was generally resorted to by male Brahmins, but also men of other castes, to redress some grievance which could not otherwise be accomplished. Heber, in his famous travelogue on India, records the following regarding the dhurna:

> 'This is a practice not infrequent in the intercourse of individuals to enforce payment of a debt, or forgiveness of one. And among Hindoos it is very prevailing not only from the apprehended dreadful consequences of the death of the petitioner but because many are of opinion that while a person sits *dhurna* at their door, they must not themselves presume to eat or undertake any secular business. It is even said some persons hire Brahmins to sit dhurna for them, the thing being done by proxy,

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and the dhurna of a Brahmin being naturally more awful in its effects than that of a *Soodra* could do.'[46]

Not only men performed dhurna, on rare occasions women did too.[47]

Dhurna was quite frequent in Varanasi and its adjoining areas. But as Sir John Shore, the Governor-General and the President of Asiatic Society, reported on one occasion, no instance of exactly the similar nature of dhurna had occurred to his knowledge in either Bengal or Bihar. He knew, of course, that even Brahmins in Calcutta had been known to obtain charity or subsistence from Hindus by posting themselves before the doors of homes under a declaration to remain there until their solicitations were granted. Moderation of the demand generally induced compliance, which would be withheld if the requisition were excessive. But John Shore had been credibly informed that instances of this custom occasionally occurred in some parts of the vizier's (the Nawab of Oudh) dominions, and that Brahmins there had been successfully employed to recover debts calling upon the debtor to pay them under notification that they would fast until the discharge of the debt. Naturally, the debtor, if he possessed property or credit never failed to satisfy such a demand against him.[48]

Requisites of dhurna

It has been recorded that to establish the act of dhurna against someone the following requisites were necessary :

1. That on sitting in dhurna if such a person is a Brahmin, his Brahminical string shall be removed from the neck and suspended by the ear while the party sitting is to say 'I am sitting on such a one.'

2. He is neither himself to eat, nor to allow the parties on whom he is sitting to eat.

3. He is not to remove himself from the spot where he has instituted the dhurna, nor to discontinue it of his own accord.

4. He is occasionally to sit in dhurna with a knife and poison in his hand and to occasionally wound himself and take this poison, while at other times he is to abstain from these last two acts.[49]

The scriptural sanctions of dhurna

The Acting Judge of the Varanasi Court came to know from persons learned in Muslim Law in November of 1794 that there was no reference to dhurna in Muslim Law books, but that it was sanctioned by Hindu scriptures. According to these scriptures, there are the following six modes of dhurna :

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The first was to display *jinnes* (*chinhas ?*), the mark of his holy order and symbol of dignity, out of its usual place—as on his ear or some other part or to remove it entirely from his body. The implication or effect produced by this act was that 'if they will not give me what is rightfully mine, my holy caste of Brahmin shall be lost, and the guilt of such will be very heinous'. The consequent sin will devolve on the person on whom he is sitting dhurna. This mode, according to Katyayana and Brihaspati (Hindu legal exponents), was comprehended in the modes of restraint and imprisonment. The second was to debar both debtor and creditor from eating and drinking. The third was to put the wives, children and cattle of the debtor into confinement, to make him sit down at the door himself. In the fourth and fifth modes the creditor or some other person would hold a weapon or poison (to terminate his own life) and sit at the debtor's door. In the sixth mode it was prescribed that with a knife or some other weapon he was to stab and wound his own body or to swallow poison. By this mode it was indicated that if he (the Brahmin or creditor) died as a result of either of these self-inflicted injuries, the most heinous guilt would be attached to the debtor upon his death.

These six methods or modes of compulsion were agreeable to the Hindu Shastras and to common practice as well, with confinement of the wife, children and cattle of the debtor and sitting at his door considered the most weighty.[50]

A copy of the above opinion from the City Court was sent to the *Fozedary Moolky Adalat* as guidance, though the pandits of the latter court differed from the former on certain points.[51]

A dispute over property and sitting in dhurna : a case study

The following incident of dhurna took place in 1789. Beenoo Bai, the widow of a Brahmin of the City, was in litigation with her brother-in-law, Balkishen, which was tried by arbitration and the trial and sentence were revised by the Court, and again in Appeal.

Beenoo's suit involved a claim of property and consideration of caste, which, her opponent declared, she had forfeited. The decision was rendered in her favour, but not to the extent of her wishes. Beenoo resolved, therefore, to procure by the expedient of the dhurna, what neither the arbitration nor the judicial decision had awarded her.

In conformity with this resolution, Beenoo sat in dhurna on Balkishen, and he, after persevering for several days and apprehensive of the former's

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death, repaired with her to a local Hindu temple. There they both continued to fast some time longer. Thirteen days had elapsed from the commencement of the dhurna when he yielded by entering into a conditional agreement with Beenoo that if she could establish the validity of her caste, and in proof thereof should prevail on some credible members of her own tribe to partake with her an entertainment of her providing, he would not only defray the expense of the gathering, but would also discharge her debts. These conditions were accepted by Beenoo, who fulfilled her part of the obligation, but Balkishen only defrayed the charges for entertainment. Hence, the non-performance of his engagement to discharge her debts as well induced Beenoo to file suit against him. It was thus the practice of dhurna, with proofs of its commencement, were officially brought to the authority's notice.[52]

Government Regulation bans dhurna

The Government issued an order on November 2, 1792 that one sitting in dhurna 'be banished from the Hon'ble Company's dominions and have his claim dismissed' and that 'whosoever hath claims against another is to complain either to the Resident or to the Adalats and will certainly obtain justice.' It was ordered that this decree be proclaimed throughout the City to the end that everyone 'within the domain of the Raja of Varanasi did conform thereto on pain of suffering for contravention.' Thus, this order was circulated in the Courts and to the *amils*. After this ban was enacted several cases which otherwise would have been settled by dhurna, came before the Moolky Fozedary Adalat.

Some six years later, in 1798, Sir John Shore reported that the interference of the Court, and even that of the Resident on the occasions of dhurna within Varanasi, had occasionally proved insufficient to check the practice.[53] Shore then rightly observes in his report :

> 'It has been deemed in general most prudent to avoid for this purpose (prohibition of *dhurna*) the use of coercion, from the apprehension that the first appearance of it might drive the sitter in dhurna to suicide. The discredit of the act would not only fall upon the officers of justice, but upon the Government itself.'[54]

Over some years, however, the practice of dhurna by one individual against another was reduced to a great extent.

DISTURBANCES OF THE PEACE DURING ALI IBRAHIM'S MAGISTRACY (1781-1793)

During the Magistracy of Ibrahim Ali and the Residency of Jonathan

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Duncan there was at least one incident of mass agitation launched for procuring a repeal of a Government regulation passed for keeping the City clean 'by public necessaries' (toilets).[55]

Both the Magistrate and the Resident also occasionally encountered difficulties in exerting their authority in the City owing to the independent nature of some chiefs, especially the Marathas who resided here either permanently or temporarily. This becomes evident from the following incident reported by P. Treves, Acting Resident, on May 19, 1793, to the Governor-General.[56]

Madhav Rao, an agent to Nana Faḍnavis, the great Maratha chief, had been living in Varanasi with many followers for some months in 1793. He and his men were accused of committing many offences, such as seizing the belongings of anyone he or his people had trouble with and beating and confining anyone that gave him or his people any opposition. On May 17, Treves, got a complaint from local merchants that the Resident's *chuprasees* had seized every boat at many ghats so that not a single one could be procured, and further, that many people who had refused to give them up had been most cruelly treated. Treves, being conscious that he had given no such order for boats and that chuprasies behaving in such a manner could not actually belong to his staff, arranged to give notice to the Magistrate and also to apprehend the people in question. Upon further enquiry, it was found that these men were in the employ of Madhav Rao and that they were seizing every boat in the City and displaying Resident badges in the commission of every kind of irregularity. It was also learnt that Madhav Rao had beaten the *laskar* of Grants, who had been stationed with his master's boats till they were laden, and that Madhav Rao had also assaulted two *ghat majees* for opposing this irregular conduct.

Not having a *munshi* at hand at that time, Treves sent a polite message to Madhav Rao and also ordered his own chuprasies to go to ascertain whether those people who had been taken by Madhav Rao's men were still confined and, if so, to request their release. Madhav Rao pre-emptively refused to comply with the Resident's request and was alleged to have used improper language to the latter's people in turning them out of his compound. Two hours later, however, he released the prisoners who bore the marks of severe beatings. The Resident then gave Ali Ibrahim Khan the information regarding this incident and requested him to take such steps as he thought necessary to prevent a similar event in the future. But to this end, even this powerful and influential administrator pleaded his

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helplessness. He informed the Resident that he had already heard much of the oppression Madhav Rao's men were guilty of, and that he was fearful that they would pay little attention to any of his people already stationed there. Hence, Ibrahim begged the Resident's intervention in this matter.

Accordingly, the Resident wrote an official letter to Madhav Rao on May 18, 1793, to which Madhav Rao pleaded his innocence with the following reply :

> 'The fact is, I never to this time oppressed any of the *Ryats* (residents) of the city, neither have I now a wish to do it. As you have sent for the chuprasies, I would have sent them directly but they are not here. Although you have so much friendship for me it is the third day since Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan has stationed people over my house, which you are not acquainted with; therefore, how am I to find out your friendship? I also will acquaint Nana Fadnavis with this circumstance and as he shall order me I will act.'

The Resident was not at all satisfied with Madhav Rao's evasive reply and wrote back:

> 'I have enquired of the Nawab (Ibrahim) and understand he has only sent one or two chuprasies from the Adalat to seize those disturbers of the peace that beat and ill-used Mr. Grant's *hurkarah* and the two ghat-majees (boatmen) and that they are not stationed over your house as you say, but are on the watch at a distance because when the Nawab heard what had happened, he sent to you for the offenders and you replied that you would not suffer them to be taken. Therefore, as the Nawab has the charge of the city, as it is his duty to keep the peace and to prevent oppression, what he has done in this instance is right. I highly approve of his conduct.'

The Resident also decided that as Madhav Rao had made an improper use of the badges lent to him as a courtesy, they would be taken back. He also requested the approbation by a higher authority in this matter. In reply, on November 7, 1794, the Governor-General reasserted the authority of British Government and the Resident, as its agent, paramount over every soul of Varanasi. An official Resolution, part of which is quoted below, was duly communicated to the Resident :

> 'That neither the Royal family nor occasional resident be allowed to exercise any authority over any persons in the province of city of Benares not their own immediate servants, and that it be made a part of the instructions to the senior judge in his capacity of Resident to explain this rule to them, and that they and their followers must hold themselves amenable to the established jurisdiction for any violations of the laws of the country.'[57]

The Governor-General, however, did hold that this resolution should not be indiscriminately and rigorously enforced, but that the senior judge should be allowed discriminatory power in dispensing this authority,

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especially in such cases wherein application would be obviously objectionable given the rank and circumstance of the parties involved.[58]

This sort of stricture even by the highest authority could not totally stop the recurrence of such incidents, however. For example, another confrontation took place between Chimnaji Appa, a resident Maratha chief and the youngest brother of Peshwa Baji Rao, and the Magistrate on the occasion of the unruly conduct of Appa's followers.*

INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

The efficiency and integrity of Government officials are essential pre-requisites for the good and successful administration of state, which is all the more true with the introduction of any new system. This point was highlighted both in Warren Hastings' Hookumnamah and in the detailed instructions Ali Ibrahim gave to the officers of the Courts and the Kotwali. Not only that, strict vigilance was also kept on the conduct of the employees of these establishments.

In most cases the public servants of Varanasi, including the judges of the Courts, transacted their business as desired by the authorities and to the satisfaction of the people, but a few instances of dishonesty also came to light. Whenever such cases were proved, the offenders were punished. Two examples of such incidents are furnished below :

Amba Shankar, the Mint Master of Benares, being convicted of debasing gold coins, was removed from office and Munnoo Lal was appointed in his place in June 1785.[59] This swift punishment of a high-ranking Government officer must have served notice to other public servants as well.

On another occasion, a charge of dishonesty was levelled against Abdur Rashid Khan, a Munsif of the Dewany Adalat.[60] One Mehendy Ali Khan placed an *arzee* before the Resident, communicating that the said Munsif took bribes and made the following remark in the petition : 'In a City where such a knave (meaning Abdur Rashid) is Munsif of the Adalat, God protect the inhabitants.'[61] The Resident also sent a report to the Governor-General on September 11, 1795, in which he described the following details of allegations against the said Munsif :[62]

A suit had been filed by Jaykern and Seetal Prashaud against one Laloo for the recovery of a debt in the Court where Abdur Rashid

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* For details, see Chapter XVIII.

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happened to sit as Munsif. Jaykern also sent seven Brahmin women to sit in dhurna at the house of the plaintiff and threatened, 'I will take all your effects on account of this debt.' Moreover, Jaykern confined Oodan Beeby, a sister of the plaintiff's. At this, the plaintiff's mother complained before Munsif Rashid against the conduct of Jaykern. Rashid then proposed that if she were to give him four to five thousand rupees, he would never issue a decree in favour of Jaykern. Acting on this assurance, the plaintiff's mother gave the Munsif five hundred rupees in cash, a studded *hooca* worth one thousand rupees, and a studded mirror worth two hundred rupees, or a first instalment totalling one thousand and seven hundred rupees. The Munsif desisted from finalizing any decree in favour of Jaykern and against the plaintiff and suspension of a decree was to continue during Jaykern's lifetime. As such, the plaintiff's mother continued providing the following to the Munsif; one hundred fifty rupees in cash, six *sitrengees* worth three hundred rupees, two carpets worth one hundred rupees, and one sword and dagger worth one hundred twenty-five rupees, or another six hundred seventy-five rupees in cash and goods. Then after all these bribes had been accepted and assurances given, the Munsif finally issued a decree against Laloo, which, the woman submitted in her suit against Munsif Rashid, ruined her financially. To prove these charges against the Munsif the petitioner also produced three witnesses.

Though Shah Ismael, Abdur Rashid's *vakeel*, delivered an *arzee* on August 2, 1794, pleading the latter's innocence, Rashid's overall conduct and disposition as a Munsif failed to raise him above suspicion.[63]

THE INDEPENDENT SPIRIT OF ALI IBRAHIM

Generally speaking, the officers concerned with the administration of law and justice worked with the utmost devotion and integrity under the supervision of the Residents and Magistrate Ibrahim's direct control with but few exceptions as noted above. The whole staff, including Ibrahim, however, would become irritated, if not humiliated, when the question of swearing in of officers under him was raised in the name of ensuring justice and equity among Government officers.

This was proposed by no less than Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General himself. Though Cornwallis admitted that Ibrahim Ali was an able administrator and one who kept a vigilant eye on subordinates, he wrote in favour of such swearing in to Ibrahim on October 21, 1790 :

'No precaution ought to be omitted that is likely to ensure from the officers of

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Government, especially those employed in the courts of justice, faithful discharge of their Trusts. This is a sentiment, I am certain, that will strike you, equally with myself, as proper and convinced from your own assiduity and integrity of your earnest desire that the officers under your authority should be in like manner careful in the execution of their duty and watchful of impartial justice, and so I recommend that you direct them to take an oath, which shall be administrerd to them by Mr. Duncan publicly in his *cutchery*.'

Cornwallis further argued :

'I am further induced to recommend this step in consideration that it is a measure adopted not only in all courts of justice, but particularly in those established in the districts of Benares, and except the officers of your Adalat, all those in the Government Cutcheries have taken an oath prescribed to them by Government.'

Duncan, who was asked to put this measure into effect soon discovered, much to his chagrin, strong resentment and opposition from Ali Ibrahim and the officers of the Court and the Kotwali against oath-taking. Ibrahim himself transmitted a long remonstrance against it to the Residency which, observed Duncan, was 'replete with the loftiest expressions of independence and integrity of all the members of the Court.'[64] The officers became so infuriated on this issue that they even 'threatened to throw up their offices rather than submit to the disgrace of being sworn.'[65] Against such ardent objections by the local officers the Resident did not dare proceed in implementing the Governor-General's order. The Board also thought it wiser to dispense with the swearing in than to try and induce the officers to comply.[66]

We have already recorded the arguments put forward in favour of the oath by the Governor-General himself. Now let us explore the reasons why Ibrahim and his officers refused to act according to the directives of such an authority.

In the first place, no such tradition of swearing in of public officers had previously existed in the land. Moreover, Magistrate Ibrahim, a man of independent spirit, must have regarded the Governor-General's request as interference with his jurisdiction and the administration of his office.

Ibrahim as well as his officers could also hardly see any justification for such oaths having discharged their duties with integrity and sincerity for several years. In fact, such a system of swearing in Government officers was suddenly emphasized, not so much out of any necessity, but rather out of Cornwallis' utter, if not questionable, distrust in the integrity and efficiency of indigenous officers. The whole affair reveals Ibrahim and

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his colleagues' extraordinary disposition compared with the officers of other localities, who, as Cornwallis himself wrote, 'submitted to the dictates' of the Governor-General.

ALI IBRAHIM PASSES AWAY

At the end of a long and distinguished career, Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan passed away on 31st August 1793, possibly at the age of sixty three. At this time Governor-General Cornwallis addresses the following letter of condolence on September 9, 1793, to his son, Nasiruddin, a Munsif of the Court of Varanasi. This letter expresses the Governor-General's deep concern at the death of Ali Ibrahim, as well as his appreciation of the late Hakim :

> 'I have learnt the painful news of your father's death. I am very much shocked on hearing this news. The deceased was most dutiful, astute and a well-wisher of the British Government what makes us mourn his death very much. But what God wills, He does and we have no other way but to submit....'[67]

A pension of five hundred rupees per month was granted to the Hakim's family on September 29, 1795, two years after his demise.[68] Though it appears that Nasiruddin temporarily worked as the officiating Magistrate after the death of his father, he was not finally considered for this post.[69]

AFTER ALI IBRAHIM WHO ?

Now, the pressing issue of Ali Ibrahim's replacement in the post of Hakim, the Judge and Magistrate of Benares, became a priority. On May 8, 1795, Resident Duncan suggested that of all the inhabitants of Varanasi, Aka Fukheruddin, then Judge of the Moolky Fozedary Adalat, appeared, from his universally acknowledged character of strict integrity as well as from the former's own experience in regard to the regularity of his conduct and judicial proceedings, 'to be the fullest person among the natives' to succeed the late Hakim. He further suggested that in case Fukheruddin joined the new post, Maulavi Kader Khan (a competent Munsif of the Dewany Adalat of the City) would be a suitable successor to Aka Fukheruddin in his present office. The Resident also advocated for the posting of Fukheruddin in the following words :

> 'That in view of the instances of malpractice in the Benares Courts, this change in the City Court may be further attended with the present advantage of operating as an additional inducement to all those who may have been concerned in any corrupt payments to the officers of the City Court to come forward with their claims.'[70]

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It appears that all arguments in support of Aka Fukheruddin to the post of the Magistrate became mute with the appointment of Samuel Davis to the post sometime at the end of 1795 or the beginning of the following year. This marked the first appointment of a European instead of an Indian as Magistrate of Varanasi.[71]

AN EVALUATION OF ALI IBRAHIM KHAN

We shall now attempt an assessment of Ali Ibrahim, as an administrator as well as a man, by taking into consideration what others who had come in close contact with him in different capacities had to say of him. We shall further see, in course of this appraisal, how he contributed to and spearheaded a silent revolution in the field of the administration of law and justice in the City under the British.

Resident James Grant made the following observation on April 1, 1782, just six months after Ibrahim's appointment as Magistrate : 'I should be wanting in equity to Ally Ibrahim Khan were I be silent on the moderation and propriety of his conduct. Since he has been visited with his present appointment he has, I believe, given universal satisfaction.'[72]

In 1788, Jonathan Duncan, the next Resident was asked by the Government to report his opinion on the circumstances and character of Nawab Ali Ibrahim as Judge and Magistrate of Varanasi.[73] Duncan gave an objective assessment and held a high opinion of Ibrahim, especially his work in an 'unfavourable state of affairs,' in the following :

> '...he was a highly worthy and just Magistrate and Judge. If he had any fault it was perhaps in a want of sufficient decision and in leaving rather too much to the officers under him. However, both these circumstances were ascribable in a considerable degree to others that did not entirely depend on him.'[74]

Duncan narrated in the same report the initial attitude of the people towards the newly founded Court, offering his comments on the role of Ibrahim in this and other respects too :

> 'They (the Benares people) would no doubt become gradually fitter to assimilate the British (system).... Hoping in this respect, but as the first Judge of the first established court in this country, the Resident could but think that the moderation (even there be a little excess in it) of Ibrahim Ali Khan's conduct, is happily adapted to the situation he was placed in. As to the second circumstance, ... it was to be observed that by the constitution of the Court as framed by Mr. Hastings, the Nawab was himself only chief magistrate having under him a criminal and civil department, in fact, and whose acts he must sanction and who indeed tried all causes under his inspection and with his approbation in the same house or court where he himself

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resided, ... which degree of distinction or delegation of authority might probably have given rise and afforded some cause to the idea of his leaving too much to his officers, who were certainly not so trustworthy as himself; as far therefore as this might be and it be in some degree a vice, it arose out of the nature of the institution of his court.'[75]

Nevertheless, Duncan sincerely believed that there had been no better alternative to Ibrahim among the local people when he closed his report saying : '... but on the whole the Resident did not think it probable that a better or perhaps, in all respects, so good a native magistrate could be provided in his stead and on the footing his adalat now stood.'[76]

Governor-General Cornwallis shared the opinions of the Resident on Ibrahim when he wrote the following to Ali Ibrahim on October 21, 1790 in a somewhat patronizing tone :

'You must be well convinced by my repeated letters to you that your attention to the duty of your office has been a constant source of pleasure and satisfaction to me and the frequent advice I receive from Mr. Duncan tend to confirm the good opinion I entertain of your zeal and assiduity in the administration of justice and in adopting every measure which can contribute towards preventing the officers subordinate to you acting contrary to their duty.'[77]

On September 3, 1787 the ryots and inhabitants of Varanasi, both rich and poor, in a formal letter expressed their appreciation of the services of Ali Ibrahim as Hakim of Benares.[78] They wrote that justice, peace and honesty had been the key-note of his administration and that he 'had been the cause of spreading the good name of the English Company far and wide by his attention to the pilgrims and visitors to this City.'[79]

In course of praising Warren Hastings for his role in the removal of the oppression of pilgrims and such persons by the Gangaputras, the pandits and Brahmins of the City thanked Hastings for his appointment of a just person like Ibrahim as Magistrate for the protection of the people of the City and the administration of law and order. About Ibrahim they made the following unequivocal statements, which also bear a short account of the services he had rendered to the residents of the City, for which he rightly deserved their appreciation. They write :

'This Magistrate possessed abilities, is just and disinterested. He inserted in the regulation delivered to him that the decision of disputes between Hindus and Mahomedans must be made according to the respective religious trends; if Mahomedans, according to the rites of Islam, and nominated learned men to expound the laws of the Koran; if Hindoos, agreeable to the Shastra and appointed pundits to lay down the rules of it : and he also provided in the regulations for the peace and quiet of us. This Magistrate exerts himself for peace and has stopped all

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taxes, bribery or other expense during his administration, and we enjoy during his administration more quiet than during those of Raja Balwant Singh and Raja Chet Singh.'[80]

The citizens of Varanasi presented Warren Hastings with a certificate of appreciation on the occasion of his impeachment by the British Parliament. It has been alleged in some quarters that this certificate, bearing the above statement, is not genuine by virtue of its being sent through Ibrahim's office, and that it was possibly a manoeuvre by Ibrahim himself to secure his position in the event of Hastings' demise. But from all that has been recorded about Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan, the above statements appear perfectly genuine and not a hyperbole as they are supported by statements of appreciation of Ibrahim from both official and unofficial quarters.

IBRAHIM'S POSITION IN THE HISTORY OF VARANASI

The strict, tactful, and above all, religiously neutral administration of Ibrahim contributed substantially to wiping out nagging suspicions of the new administration from the minds of the people and also in creating popular opinion in favour of it. Moreover, in consequence of efficient administration, innumerable pilgrims and visitors from all quarters of India started pouring into the City; with the number of permanent residents also multiplying from 1781 onward.[81] This development has been corroborated by Ali Ibrahim himself[82] as well as by Davis,[83] the first European Magistrate as successor to Ibrahim.

Nevertheless, it is distressing to learn that more than two years after his passing away, Ibrahim was accused of embezzlement. Mehendy Ali Khan reported to Duncan on September 24, 1795 that he had discovered more than seventy thousand rupees in monies meant for the establishment of the City Court had been embezzled by Ibrahim. He added that he had obtained 'some vouchers in proof thereof under the late Governor-General Mr. Hastings' signature.'[84]

The late Nawab was, however, given the benefit of doubt under special circumstances detailed in the following resolution of the Governor-General-in-Council dated September 25, 1795 :

'Although the appropriations which Nasseruddin (son of Ali Ibrahim Khan and a judge in the court of Benares) acknowledged were made by his late father, may not appear warranted under the existing Regulations, yet considering the character or integrity which the late Nawab preserved throughout his administration, the Board consider it but fair to presume that he deemed them justifiable under the powers and

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circumstances under which he acted, and that he would have been able to have given satisfactory explanation of his conduct in this respect, had it been required of him. The Governor-General-in-Council accordingly directs that the acting Resident be ordered to discontinue all further enquiry into these charges brought forward by Mehendy Ali Khan.'[85]

Besides being a successful administrator, other facets of Ibrahim's personality also deserve mention. He was very hardworking and a man of refined taste and had a 'broad' heart. Of the several recorded instances of his benevolence, we can mention here his personal contribution of five thousand rupees in relief to the suffering in Madras in January 1783.[86] He was also a versatile writer in Persian and the author of a number of works in both Persian and Urdu on various subjects.* The Anglo-Nepal Treaty of 1793, which he was instrumental in concluding, stands a testimony to his diplomatic skills.

It appears that three personalities, namely Hastings, Ali Ibrahim and Duncan, were chiefly responsible for bringing about order and peace in a very disorderly eighteenth-century Varanasi and presenting it with a new and fair administration. While Warren Hastings formulated the guidelines of the new administration, it was Ali Ibrahim who shouldered the actual burden of implementing the new system against many odds. In later years, Duncan made further improvements in the efficiency of local administration. But unfortunately, the role of Ibrahim in the history of Varanasi has not yet been properly assessed by the historians of the City.

In fact, Ali Ibrahim occupies a unique position in the field of administration not only in the modern history of Varanasi, but also in the early history of the British dominion in India. Though he worked under foreign authority and showed allegiance to it, he was neither a meek nor a fragile personality hankering after the favour and appreciation of such authorities. He displayed independent spirit and judgement whenever necessary, though this trait was not always relished by higher authorities for obvious reasons. He commanded the respect of both the British and the Indians who came in contact with him. It would not be inappropriate to remark in this connection that Nawab Ali Ibrahim Khan is a glaring example of an Indian administrator that clearly contradicts the opinions and prejudices of Governor-General Cornwallis, who had little faith in the abilities and character of Indian officers and started appointing Europeans in higher posts of Indian Government. Accordingly, Cornwallis appointed

* Details of his writings have been furnished in Chapter XII.

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a European to the vacant post of the Benares Magistrate after Ibrahim Ali Khan's demise.

CRIME IN THE CITY AROUND THE 1800s

The passing away of Ali Ibrahim had an immediate and negative impact on law and order as evidenced by the following statement from Court Records of 1794. During a murder hearing (details mentioned earlier) the victim's wife clearly states:

> 'It was about a week after the death of the Nawab Aly Ibrahim Khan that Bhicky Roy (the accused) ... seeing the City released from every authority of a master gave my husband violent strokes.'[87]

The situation worsened further with crimes of robbery greatly aggravated in Varanasi.[88] An alleged plot to plunder the public treasury was also uncovered in 1796. A contemporary report, quoted below, giving probable numbers of bad and questionable characters and the nature of the alleged offences, throws some light on the City's world of crime around 1800.[89]

Persons purportedly getting their livelihood by forgery ...	40
Persons supported by giving false evidence in Courts of Justice, etc. ...	400
Receivers of stolen goods ...	50
Persons purportedly living entirely by theft ...	200
Notorious gamesters ...	40
Persons who have been apprehended by Courts of Justice for theft, punished, released and still in the town ...	150
Persons (*Bankas*) suspected of murders and assaults ...	400
Persons apprehended on charges of murder or assault by the Courts, punished, released, and now in the City ...	100
Dissolute and abandoned characters, possessing no ostensible means of subsistence and purportedly concerned in frauds, breaches of the peace, etc. ...	200
Total	1,580

CRIME IN THE 1840s

The following tables of thefts and burglaries in the City in 1846 gives us an idea of the number of these crimes committed in different wards and also furnishes other relevant details.[90] It should be noted here that to 'burgle' here is defined as forcible entry with the assault of victims, while

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the term 'theft' refers to instances wherein the victim is unaware of being robbed.

A. Table of Burglaries

Name of the Ward	Number of ascertainment	Value of property stolen (Rs.)	Recovered (Rs.)	Arrested	Convicted	Released
Kotwali	14	3493-11-9	1152-04-6	9	4	5
Kalbhyro	15	688-09-0	93-15-0	13	7	6
Dashashwamedh	12	2235-00-0	212-15-9	26	5	21
Chetganj	21	534-00-6	-	8	-	8
Jaitpura	24	426-05-6	91-04-0	10	5	5
Bhelupura	30	9941-04-9	-	10	1	9
Adampura	11	254-11-6	-	10	2	8
Secrole	28	283-00-1	9-07-0	12	1	11
Total	155	17,856-11-1	1,559-14-3	98	25	73

B. Table of Thefts

Name of the Ward	Number of ascertainment	Value of property stolen (Rs.)	Recovered (Rs.)	Arrested	Convicted	Released
Kotwali	35	5425-10-0	33-07-6	35	15	19
Kalbhyro	39	3942.01.3	2330.01.3	32	15	17
Dashashwamedh	38	907-15-0	32-10-0	14	8	6
Chetganj	29	736-03-9	405-05-9	28	10	18
Jaitpura	28	699-07-6	289-06-3	28	10	18
Bhelupura	34	1599-04-9	339-12-0	47	20	27
Adampura	28	1287-08-6	32-00-6	19	8	-
Secrole	55	1957-05-0	323-06-0	53	21	31
Total	286	16,555-07-9	3,786-01-3	256	107	136

The above tables show that in spite of police diligence, the number of burglaries and thefts was not insignificant. Furthermore, given the high value of stolen property, very little, if any, was ever recovered and in only a few cases were the culprits apprehended and convicted. Moreover, in areas like Bhelupura Ward and outskirts between the City and Secrole, burglaries were committed in greater number than in the heart of the City. The number of thefts far exceeded that of burglaries and were committed in every ward of the City in almost equal number except in Secrole where instances were especially high. Even Government officers residing near the cantonment were not spared, as thieves residing in these areas continually committed thefts under the cover of nightfall in spite of every precaution.

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It also deserves mention that an accurate report of burglaries and thefts could not be obtained, and consequently, the actual number of such crimes may have been far greater than that reported. The City Magistrate himself confessed that a greater proportion of thefts was committed at large fairs by gangs of pickpockets who had flocked into the City from great distances to ply their trade. Again, other crimes like the snatching of women's ornaments, such as nose-rings, were perhaps never brought to the notice of the police[91] owing partly to a prejudice against women appearing in public.[92] These assailants were generally armed with an instrument called a *toon*, a small piece of steel with a fine sharp edge.[93]

A COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CRIMES

The following is the record of adjudicated crimes for 1845 and 1846 showing the different types of offences perpetrated in the City and adjacent areas that were tried in the Fozedary Court of Varanasi.[94]

Crime	1845 Cases	Individuals brought to trial	1846 Cases	Individuals brought to trial
Murder	4	8	14	62
Homicide	5	13	3	9
Decoitee	2	8	1	4
Highway Robbery	2	10	3	14
Burglary	303	147	261	160
Theft with murder	-	-	2	2
Theft	388	377	429	419
Cattle thefts	21	44	37	66
Child stealing	3	16	10	26
Received stolen property	13	66	2	3
Affray	2	38	10	58
Assault with wounding	32	105	56	172
Petty assault	340	816	390	889
Arson	5	14	6	8
Counterfeit of coin	1	6	2	3
Forgery-attempt	1	7	4	14
Vagrancy	79	45	78	67
Budmushees (miscellaneous mischief)	70	208	65	137
Total	1271	1928	1373	2113

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THE MAGNITUDE OF CRIME IN THE CITY

Burglary and theft in the City have already been discussed. Among the other crimes listed, the cases of assault and general mischief appear to have been numerous as well, but, as we have pointed out, these reports were not exhaustive.[95] For example, there must have been many more cases of murder that were never reported at all. To substantiate this suspicion we may quote from Captain Francis Egerton, who writes after visiting the City Jail in February 1851 :

> 'The majority of prisoners were in for theft, but there were more than a fair proportion of murder cases. In fact, I was told by more than one person, likely to be well-informed, that murder is unfortunately more common than is generally supposed. The Ganges tells no tales, where so many corpses are every day thrown in; and nobody misses a native. Europeans are not so often attacked: there is such a to-do if any of them are missed.'[96]

One may reasonably assume that these unknown and 'unmissed' victims of this most heinous of crimes in Varanasi were, indeed, hapless pilgrims. Again, according to these reports, there were substantial numbers of kidnappings of children to rob them of their costly ornaments, to engage them in begging, or to sell them to slave merchants or those connected with professional dancing, singing or prostitution. The kidnapping of women was also not uncommon in the City, but only a few such cases were officially reported. Generally, organized gangs were involved in kidnappings. In 1847, the members of one such gang, that had been successfully stealing children over an extended period by employing old women to this purpose, were arrested. These women inveigled children away and passed them through various hands until they eventually found their way to the Oudh territory, where they were sold as Rajput children of high extraction. According to one Magistrate, the houses of Muslim princes of the City, as well as of Oudh, were the receiving stations for kidnapped children.[97] The involvement of women in such kidnapping also reveals that along with men, there were also women offenders, though their numbers were fewer. That female offenders were also convicted and imprisoned on various other charges is corroborated by a description of prisoners of the City Jail of 1851 to be furnished later.

From the many cases of criminal, dissolute, and vagrant children brought before the Magistrate from the haunts of vice, profligacy and beggary, the movements of idle convict offspring in and about the jail, and the wanderings of stray, stolen and deserted children within the City

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around the beginning of the nineteenth century, one can guess how rampant juvenile delinquency must have been in Varanasi during this time.[98] Moreover, undesirable newborns, both dead and alive, were occasionally discovered being discarded by mothers or other relatives in a desperate effort to avoid some societal criticism or sanction.[99]

OCCURRENCES AND CAUSES OF AFFRAYS

Most affrays in the City were caused by quarrels between abandoned characters that usually ended in the use of weapons. Generally, these fights originated in quarrels at gaming-houses, in the playing of pigeons, wrestling, or similar amusements.[100] The Courts, according to the City Magistrate, would deal with such offences, especially those occurring in the crowded streets of the City, too leniently, which indirectly contributed to their recurrence. The short terms of imprisonment given to such offenders was not a deterrent and miscreants would instantly resume their former bad habits.[101] The weapon of choice of these hooligans was a knife called *bichhua*, which was not generally seen elsewhere. This knife, about six inches in length, tapered to a fine point with a metal handle, had no real purpose other than stabbing and was carried in the waist folds of a *dhoti*.[102]

In 1847, in view of the frequent occurrences of bloody affrays, Joint Magistrate C. Ommaney asked the police to enforce that part of Regulation XVII of 1795 which enjoined the arrest between sunset and sunrise of all suspicious-looking and disorderly persons.[103] He addressed the implementation of this step to the Commissioner on April 26, of the same year by saying : '... I am happy to say that I have been successful in almost totally suppressing this crime (of affrays)....'[104]

In the same communication, Ommaney also suggested that the manufacture of the small knife used only for stabbing should be banned by law; that the circumstances of its being found in a man's possession should subject the possessor to severe punishment; and that the Court should be more strict in dealing with such cases.[105]

Affrays also occasionally took place owing to disputes between the Muslims and the Hindus and also at some religious ceremonies such as processions observed by members of different religions.[106]

THE BANKAS—A CLASS OF PRIZE-FIGHTERS

The Bankas, who were Muslims,[107] have been described as

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'bravados'[108] and 'prize-fighters'.[109] They were called *Bankas* for the peculiar curve of the swords they brandished[110] and their number was about four hundred in around 1800.[111] Jayanarayan Ghoshal made special reference to them in his famous account of Varanasi for their carrying of different types of arms and for their frequent use of these weapons against opponents.[112]

They were especially responsible for numerous affrays in the City which cost a considerable number of lives almost regularly.[113] One English traveller, called A.D., leaves the following account of an encounter between a Banka and an Englishman around 1810, giving us a glimpse of the Bankas :

> 'An English gentleman was met a short time since by one of these (Bankas) on a narrow tracking path by the side of the river where there was barely room to pass : neither seemed disposed to move out of a straight line; but putting on a very fierce look, the Mussulman pulled the turban over his left eyebrow and drew his sword muttering *kaufeer*, which means 'infidel'. The gentleman had nothing else for it than to make a dart and push his opponent down the bank; but his life would have the forfeit of this temerity, if he had not quickly escaped to his boat and shored off.'[114]

INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZED CRIMINALS

There were both individuals and organized gangs whose livelihoods were derived from criminal activities. This is evident from the report on the census of criminals of 1801 referring to gangs of thieves, pickpockets and kidnappers of children, which has already been alluded to.

THE SONAREAHS—ORGANIZED GANGS OF THIEVES

The *Sonareahs* were organized gangs of thieves who carried on operations in many parts of India over a long period. These operations were especially prevalent in Varanasi and Allahabad. We learn from a report of one Brown, the Deputy Superintendent of Police of Chanderi, dated June 5, 1856, that he had heard from time to time from some Sonareahs that a *buneah* named Beerbul Deechut (Dikshit), residing in Varanasi, was the head or *mukeah* of the tribe in that quarter and the general receiver of all stolen property acquired by the Sonareahs. Brown communicated all this to the Magistrate of Benares and then through his co-operation, Beerbul was arrested in the City. It was found that though Beerbul had been carrying on the profession as the receiver and disposer of the stolen property as well as the headman of the gang of the Sonareahs, he had escaped detection and arrest for a long time on account of his

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outward appearance of respectability and, more truly, owing to the protection offered him by members of the local police.[115]

Testimonies of Sonareahs who were cognisant of Beerbul's activities and were at his calling had been taken at the instance of Brown. Brown submitted the information he had elicited from the testimony of three Sonareahs and one informer to Captain A. Skene, the Superintendent of Police at Jhansi.[116]

Brown also remarked in his report to Skene that the testimonies he had taken were substantially correct, as they corresponded exactly with what he had heard from other sources. These testimonies, quoted in part below, are fascinating as well as important for the study of the crime-world of the City.

Excerpts of Interrogations of Sonareahs :[117] Deposition of Jalhooa Sonareah

Q. What do you know regarding Beerbul Deechut (Dikshit?) of Varanasi?

A. Beerbul formerly (was) at Banpoor; about 6 or 7 years ago he left (the place)... with his family either from a quarrel with the Raja or some other cause, and settled at Varanasi. He lives by his calling as a Sonareah. Last *Phagoon* (the month of Phalgun) I went to the *melah* called *Hurburchettra* on the Ganges and I met Beerbul with about forty men. Some of them were residents of Varanasi itself and some of the Tehre state. He (Beerbul) carries about embroidered caps for sale as a blind man, and thieves wherever he goes. At that one melah he got nearly 700 rupees worth of property.

Q. Does Beerbul keep a shop?

A. He has a shop and sells *attah*, *dal*, etc., and has also got a *kothi* for which he paid 200 rupees.

Q. Do all Sonareahs who visit Varanasi assemble at Beerbul's house?

A. Yes, always. And whatever they collect by theft they make over to Beerbul to take care of for them, until they are ready to return homewards (to Bundelkhand) when they receive their property from Beerbul, less Beerbul's share for keeping it.

Q. Where does Beerbul store all this property ?

A. He keeps a proportion in his shop and he also disposes of it by sale to other *buneahs*.

Q. What share does Beerbul take?

A. He takes more than half, and if any one objects to this arrangement, he threatens him, and out of 4 rupees he takes 3 and deducts the cost of all the food he supplies us with.

Q. Do the Kotwal and *burkundaz* (of Varanasi) know of this ?

A. Yes. They all know of it, and they receive their share of the spoil. If any Sonareah disagrees about the division of it, Beerbul sends for a burkundaz and threatens to have him arrested. Makundah Dhobey whom you captured had a quarrel with him in this way.

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Q. In Phagoon, how many Sonareahs had assembled at Beebul's place ?
A. About 40 men.
Q. Do the Sonareahs give false names when arrested ?
A. No.
Q. Are any of the Varanasi people Sonareah ?
A. No.
Q. Has Beerbul been caught ?
A. Once he committed a theft in the river and the police beat him. He was taken into Varanasi, and there managed to get released I do not know how.
Q. Do not inhabitants of Varanasi suspect Beerbul of being a thief ?
A. Yes. A great many people suspect him.
Q. Do you Sonareahs look upon Beerbul as a *mukeah* (headman)?
A. All who go to Varanasi consider him the mukeah.
Q. Do you know the names of the buneahs to whom Beerbul sells the property the Sonareahs bring to him ?
A. No. I do not.
Q. At what melah and fairs near Varanasi do the Sonareahs collect ?
A. At all the fairs, assemblies and all down by Patna and Danapur.
Q. Does Beerbul give *zeafuts* to the tribes who visit Varanasi ?
A. Yes. He pretends they are his friends (or) relations who have come upon pilgrimage.
Q. How comes it that the returning Sonareahs generally carry so much cash, and comparatively speaking, so little other property ?
A. They sell a good deal of the property they steal through Beerbul's agency and bring back the rupees to their houses.

Depositions of the other Sonoreahs have been placed in the Appendix.[118]

FINDINGS ABOUT SONAREAHS FROM THE INTERROGATIONS

A close examination of the interrogation above and others placed in the Appendix reveal that though on most of the vital points the witnesses gave the same evidence, they differed on some details. For example, while Jelooha held that the Sonareahs did not use false names if caught, Gureeby, the informer, categorically states that the Sonareahs did, in fact, do so. Again, while Jelooha opines that Beerbul was suspected by many in the City to be the ringleader of the gang in Varanasi, Gureeby observes that only a few people of that place knew the actual disposition of Beerbul and others regarded him either as a respectable person or a simple shopkeeper.

If the pieces of information about the Sonareahs scattered in these interrogations are put together, we get the following picture of the gang :

Sonareahs, who numbered about 2000 (not including women), were

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organized gangs of thieves living in the four states of the Bundelkhand region of Banpoor, Tehree, Dutteah and Shahgarh. They would visit important and remote cities of India like Calcutta, Gaya, Danapur, Patna, Varanasi, Khandesh, Bombay and Madras in groups on important occasions attended by large concourse of people. There they carried on operations under the direction of a *mukeah*, or head-man. They would steal and sell the stolen property in connivance with local agents and, in some cases, also with the local police. The chiefs of their states of origin knew of their activities but were kept satisfied by receiving valuable presentations as their *nuzur*.

So far as Varanasi was concerned, it was visited by the gangs of the Sonareahs, especially on the occasions of important festivals like the *Holi*, *Buḍhwamangal*, *Dussera*, etc., when people were in a festive mood and would throng in multitudes to take part in these festivals and fairs. Beerbul, mukeah and main architect of gang operations in the City, managed to maintain an outward appearance of respectability so that his true identity could not be easily detected. Frequented by his fraternity of thieves usually at night, Beerbul collected the stolen articles and sold them to businessmen of the City, giving his colleagues money in lieu of these goods after deducting his own share. He rarely conducted operations by himself and got it done by others. He and his gang were so daring and unscrupulous that they did not even spare the Raja of Varanasi, whose property they also stole on occasion.

The worst part of the whole situation was that the Sonareahs could carry on their profession in Varanasi on such a large scale and over so long a period without fear of capture because of the tacit support and protection by certain members of the local police through bribes. This fact was testified by all the witnesses.

It is surprising, however, that Brown did not make any observation or pass any comment in connection with the culpability of police in his report. Perhaps he thought it prudent to send the report to the Superintendent which was explicit enough about such connections without any direct comment in this regard. He might also have felt it unwise to insinuate any corruption or questionable conduct on the part of police in this report.

BROWN'S PLAN FOR FURTHER ARRESTS OF SONAREAHS

Brown made a plan in which informers would be sent to Allahabad

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and Varanasi on numerous occasions when Sonareahs would be amassing in large numbers so that they could be arrested on the spot *en masse*. Brown, in communicating the scheme to a higher authority, held that : 'This plan would be attended with more success than waiting for the chance of capturing them as they return to Bundelkund where their homes and families are.'[119]

Unfortunately, we could not uncover details of what happened after the scheme was submitted, but thanks to Brown, operations against Sonareahs made Varanasi almost, if not completely, free of them.

ONE VARANASI-BASED GANG OF THIEVES

Another organized gang of thieves was also detected in Varanasi in the same year of 1856.[120] Sir William Sleeman, who had become famous in the modern history of India for suppressing the *Thugees* and to whom the present case was referred for observation, held that in this instance 'petty thieves of different castes and classes rarely combined for operations and that the existence of the present Benares gang was to be attributed merely to the countenance and protection extended to its members by two Darogahs of police....'[121]

However, after making thorough investigations instituted by Magistrate Lind, Bhawani Pershad, a farmer of the Bishweswar Ganj, which was under the police jurisdiction of Kalbhyro, and one Baboo, a colleague of Bhawani Pershad, were arrested as the *sardars* (leaders) of the gang, along with others who were charged with being connected with them as professional thieves. From the evidence of as many as thirty witnesses it appears that these two were notorious leaders of thieves. Having their headquarters in Varanasi, they maintained a large gang who were sent out either separately or in parties to attend all the great fairs and religious assemblages in Varanasi and also throughout the country for the purpose of stealing under their orders.

While making these enquiries, Lind was informed that Gokulchand, the *Naeb Thanahdar* of Kalbhyro in the City, was also implicated with Bhawani Pershad, Baboo and their gang, and that unless he were suspended or removed, he would probably use his influence as Thanahdar in shielding his accomplices and in intimidating parties from coming forward as witnesses against the accused. Accordingly, the Magistrate removed Gokulchand to a *mufassil thanah*. Meanwhile, suspicions against Gokulchand were further confirmed by his failure to arrest Bhawani

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Pershad as ordered until he was threatened by the Magistrate with punishments for the delay. Then, once under arrest, Bhawani Pershad was brought by Gokulchand to the Magistrate's residence privately, late at night, in hopes that by his representation, the Magistrate might be induced to free the culprit.

From the evidence of two witnesses and also from the confessions of a prisoner it seems that some of Bhawani Pershad's gang had been sent to attend the great festivals of the *Rathayatra* of Jagannath at Puri and also another festival at Hardwar. One witness was accordingly sent to Puri along with two *burkundazes*, specially selected for their supposed good character and efficiency, in order to arrest any of the gang they might see at the festivals. By this means, ten members of the gang were captured in Puri with stolen property in their possession.

Two Government witnesses who had once been members of the gang confessed that they had been in the service of Bhawani Pershad and his partner Babboo for many years and that they had been brought up by the two as professional thieves, and that they, along with other members of the gang, were deputed from time to time to attend different *melas* throughout the country. At these fairs they carried on their depredations, finally returning to Varanasi with stolen property, consisting chiefly of jewels and money, that was handed over to the ringleaders.

The witnesses further submitted that Bhawani Pershad and his partner kept regular accounts of all proceedings connected with this trade, and that in these were all entered as advances made to gang members along with the names of the parties sent out on such expeditions. Accordingly, the books of Bhawani Pershad, Baboo and Bhoudoo Sing were seized and the entries of such advances to thieves were discovered.

Above all, testimonies of the witnesses implicated Gokulchand, the Naeb Thanahdar of Kalbhyro and Debidayal, a Naeb Thanahdar of a mufassil thanah (formerly the Naeb Thanahdar of Chet Ganj in the City, since removed to a mufassil thana in consequence of being strongly suspected of being involved in a case of robbery) in having regular contact with Bhawani Pershad, Babboo and their gang, and in taking shares of the profits. These police officers seemed to have been receiving certain amounts of money from the gang for each mela in or around Varanasi, which varied according to the importance of the mela, as the price for allowing them to carry on operations uninterrupted.

It may be added that according to one report, the local gentlemen and

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other respectable citizens of Varanasi held that Gokulchand himself instigated the riots of 1852 that erupted on the occasion of introducing mess in the City Jail, which he subsequently exerted himself to quell and then amassed a large sum of money by threatening to implicate many individuals of being involved in the riot unless they paid him handsomely.* He was also described by Gubbins, the former Magistrate, as being 'a clever police officer, but a most dangerous man.'

Lind decided to take a very bold and stern stand against these Naeb Thanahdars by arresting them on charges of unlawful association with Bhawani Pershad and his gang and of knowingly receiving stolen property from them.

On the occasion of these investigations, the Magistrate also discovered that the members of such gangs had a peculiar language of their own for use among themselves. He then collected a long list of such words in common use between them from one of the gang and got it verified from others.[122]

CRIMINALS-BUSINESSMEN-POLICE RACKET

Both the Sonareah and Bhawani Pershad-Baboo gang cases exposed a not too open secret that there was an unholy alliance between criminals and a class of the *baniahs* on the one hand, and some police, on the other. What was more demoralising was that not only the rank-and-file police got involved in certain crimes, officers like the Naeb Thanahdar, the head of the police station, also did. Such police officers were even alleged to have designed plots for stealing and burglary, and were convicted of helping and shielding the offenders and of taking the spoils in return. Another complaint of harassing the people and exacting money from them on spurious pretexts by a police officer has also been referred to.

These instances not only showed an utter lack of integrity and efficiency on the part of police officers responsible for the protection of life and property of the residents, but also marred the good name of all police officers in the City.

POLICE-ESTABLISHMENT AFTER ALI IBRAHIM'S MAGISTRACY

Now let us see what steps the British administration took to improve the situation of law and order after Nawab Ali Ibrahim's tenure as Magistrate.

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* For details, see Chapter XX.

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It should be mentioned here that the system of supervision of the local administration of the City introduced by the Governor-General through the local Resident continued for a long period. Later on, the Assistant Commissioner and, above him, the Commissioner of the Benares Division, were given charge of this supervision.

In 1796, S. Davis, Ali Ibrahim's successor, proposed to divide the City and its suburbs into fifteen wards and then to subdivide these into 367 quarters for the purpose of the establishment of police stations, thereby effecting closer vigilance over Varanasi.[123] As the City started expanding from 1781 and the new suburbs became rife with miscreants, Davis wanted to extend the jurisdictions of police stations in the last seven of the fifteen wards listed below.*[124] He also proposed to provide one guard for each of the said sub-divisions of all wards.[125]

Table of Proposed Divisions

Sudder (Chowk) (42 sub-divisions)
Dashashwamedh (39 sub-divisions)
Bhyronath (43/44 sub-divisions)
Kazi Mandi (21 sub-divisions)
Telia Nala (40 sub-divisions)
Chowkhamba (21 sub-divisions)
Ghee Hatta (18 sub-divisions)
Chet Ganj (21/24 sub-divisions)
Ram Ghat (17 sub-divisions)
Shivala (18 sub-divisions)
Durga Kund (15 sub-divisions)
Ramapura (13 sub-divisions)
Jagat Ganj (15 sub-divisions)
Alaipura (28 sub-divisions)
Surya Heat (15 sub-divisions)

The Magistrate further proposed that there should be an establishment of police stations in each ward[126] as follows :

1 *Darogah* (the police-officer) at a salary of Sicca Rupees		25/- per month
1 *Muhurrir*	,,	5/-
1 *Jemader*	,,	8/-
10 *Burkundazes* (each at the rate of Rs. 4/- per month)		40/-
Akrajaut (or contingencies)		5/-
Total Rs.		83/-

* The names of the mahallas, the sub-divisions of the wards have been given in the Table of Mahallas, No. 1, in the Appendix of Chapter II.

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A study of the proposed divisions and sub-divisions of the City and the police vigilance therein (*vis-à-vis* the table of the actual police establishments in 1837 recorded below) shows that the proposal of Davis seemed to have been more elaborate and systematic in some respects than what had been in place at the time of the proposal. But Davis' plan was not implemented, perhaps for a paucity of funds, or for having been considered unnecessary by a higher authority. But his proposed infrastructure of police establishment, including the salary structure of staff (excepting for Muhurrirs whose original salary was more than Davis proposed) was put into effect.

The following Tables furnish information regarding the police establishment of the City in and around 1837.[127]

POLICE ESTABLISHMENTS IN 1837

Table 1

A statement of inferior officers of Police Darogahs detached from the Court to which they are subordinate under the Lientenant.

Ward where the Police officer is fixed	Jurisdiction of the Police in square miles	Population within the jurisdiction of the Police officer
I Under Kotwali of Varanasi	24 (directly)	155,393
1. Chowk	2	38,570
2. Kalbhyro	1¾	13,374
3. Telia Nala	2½	6,431
4. Kazi Mandi	2¼	10,038
5. Talah (Talao) Kohnah (or Thanah Old Fort)	3	6,915
6. Ausan Ganj	3	21,244
7. Jagat Ganj	2¼	15,410
8. Ghee Hatta	2	15,564
9. Ramapura	3	16,643
10. Dashashwamedh	2¼	11,204
II Secrole	29 (separately)	20,704

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Table 2

The details of the establishment of the Kotwali and the Burkundaze and the Guard-boat establishment under it in 1937 are as follows :

Kotwali Establishment

Sonoollah Kotwal		Rs. 100/- per month
Roopchund Naeb of Kotwal		Rs. 25/- "
2 Jemader	@ Rs. 8 each	Rs. 16/- "
2 Muhurrir	@ Rs. 7 each	Rs. 14/- "
48 Burkundazes	@ Rs. 4 each	Rs. 192/- "
Paul Singh—Darogah of Phatakbandi		Rs. 25/- "
Kotwali rent		Rs. 12/- "

Burkundaze Establishment

2 Jemader	@ Rs. 15/- each	Rs. 30/- per month
16 *Duffader*	@ Rs. 6/- each	Rs. 96/- "
1 Vice Duffadar		Rs. 5/- "
261 Burkundazes	@ Rs. 4/- each	Rs. 1044/- "

Guard Boats Establishment

1 Jemader	Rs. 8/- per month
1 *Maunjee* (helmsman)	Rs. 4/- "
8 *Dandees* (oarsmen)	Rs. 24/- "
5 Burkundazes	Rs. 20/- "
1 Trumpeter	Rs. 2/- "
Oil	Rs. 1/- "
Boat hire including that of a *dingi*	Rs. 11/- "

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Table 3

Details of establishment of each Thanah under the Kotwali of Varanasi

Name of Thana/ Chowkee	Name of the Thanadar : Salary p.m.	Jamadar : Salary p.m.	Nos. of Muhurrir : Salary p.m.	Nos. of Burkundaze : Salary p.m.	Nos. of Trumpeter Salary p.m.	Paper and Sundry
1. Thana Chowk	Meer Kasseem Ali (Rs. 25/- p.m.)	1-(Rs.8/- p.m.)	1-(Rs.7/- p.m.)	30-(Rs.4/- per head p.m.)	1-(Rs.2/- p.m.)	Re.1/-
2. Kalbhyro	Baluckram - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	24 - Do	1 - Do	Do
3. Teleanala	Bissessurdayal- Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	20 - Do	1 - Do	Do
4. Kazeemundee	Mannoolal - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	23 - Do	1 - Do	Do
5. Talah (Talao) (Thana Old Fort)	Madar Baksh - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	20 - Do	1 - Do	Do
6. Ausanganj	Gyes Khan - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	25 - Do	1 - Do	Do
7. Jagatganj	Gungaram - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	23 - Do	1 - Do	Do
8. Gheehattah	Kurum Khan - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	23 - Do	1 - Do	Do
9. Ramapura	Seetul Singh - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	22 - Do	1 - Do	Do
10.Dashashwamedh	Debeedayal - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	22 - Do	1 - Do	Do
11.Secrole	Brijlal - Do	1 - Do	1 - Do	30 - Do		Rs. 4/-
12.Chowkee Durga Kund		1 - Do		8 - Do		
13.Chowkee Nadeshwar		1 - Do		10 - Do		

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From the study of these tables we get many inportant information about the Police Establishment of the City around 1837 like the following :

There were four components of the police establishment; including the Kotwali, the Police Headquarters; the Thanah, or Police Stations of each ward; the Burkundaze, or body of constables; and the Guard Boats. These were supervised and coordinated by the Kotwal, the chief of the police establishment in the City. The City police force was manned by 594 burkundazes, 11 thanhadars (the officer-in-charge of a police station), 16 jemaders, 11 duffaders, 1 darogah of Phatakbandi, 1 kotwal, some office staff, a trumpeter and a few other employees. The total expenditure of the police establishment was Rs. 3223/- per month, which included staff salaries, house-rents, and other necessities and contingencies.

There were 11 police stations in the City and 2 sub-stations in the two outskirts of Durga Kund and Nadeshwar, which suggests the population was growing in those areas. The Kotwali supervised law and order in the City in addition to supervising the police stations established in each ward. Most probably, this was not true of Secrole and adjacent areas, which were supervised almost exclusively by the Secrole Police Station under the Kotwali.

Every police station in the City had nearly the same area of jurisdiction, ranging from 1 to 3 square miles. But as regards the population under the jurisdiction of each police station, there was great variation. Thus, while in Chowk and Ausan Ganj, which were thickly populated, the police stations had populations of 38,570 and 21,244 respectively within their jurisdictions, the Telia Nala and the Talao Kohnah police stations had jurisdictions over populations of only 6,431 and 6,915 respectively. It is again apparent from a comparative study of Table No. 1 and Table No. 2 that the difference in the size of population in the jurisdiction of a Thanah had little relation to the establishment of a police station. Consequently, the Chowk and Ausan Ganj police stations had to manage far larger populations than the Telia Nala and Talao Konah police stations did with the same number of police personnel.

These tables also throw light on the hierarchy in the police establishment and many other factors. Though most of the thanahdars were Hindus, the Kotwal was a Muslim at the time of the report. There was the post of Darogah for supervising the Phatakbandi System which was a civil arrangement for vigilance of the mahallas, and hence,

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supplementary to the police establishment. The guard boats must have been designed to keep vigil on the river as well as the ghats in terms of law and order. Thus, it seems that an exhaustive and elaborate arrangement of law enforcement was devised out of a growing need to protect the City from miscreants and to ensure order and peace.

As regards salary, the burkundazes and others who were paid a monthly salary of Rupees 4, or even less, were definitely ill-paid, which might have been a cause of corruption among some within the police. It is also evident from the existence of a burkundaze establishment that the services of burkundazes were requisitioned on different occasions such as fairs and festivals.

PHATAKBANDI SYSTEM REVITALIZED IN THE WAKE OF BURGLARIES

Around 1800 many cases of robbery were recorded in the City. This led the Magistrate to investigate into the workings of the Phatakbandi System. It was discovered that the system was far from satisfactory, as in many areas guards were not employed because the residents refused to contribute to their pay. The Magistrate took appropriate steps for the better functioning of the Phatakbandi System and the incidences of robbery were lessened to a considerable degree as a consequence. Moreover, wherever guards were stationed under the Phatakbandi, even petty thefts were often detected.* Thus, the regular police establishment of the City also gained in strength[128] as a sequel to all this.

OTHER STEPS

While these measures brought some relief from lawlessness, they could not solve the problems of law and order once and for all. There was a recurrence of thefts in later years that induced C. C. Jackson, Acting Magistrate, to take the following steps in order to check the upsurge in the City and its immediate suburbs in 1835 :[129]

His first move was to identify those persons without any fixed residence or ostensible means of subsistence staying in the City. Such persons were either sent to the Magistrate of the respective districts from which they were said to have come or kept in confinement until their future good conduct could be ascertained or some respectable householder who was willing to be responsible for them appeared. This move proved to be somewhat effective.

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* For details, see Chapter X.

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Within cantonment areas, to which the police had no access, thefts were committed almost every night and in almost every instance the offenders escaped apprehension. Some of the market-places inside these areas had become the abodes of notorious thieves and persons of bad character. The Commanding Officer of the Cantonment applied to the Magistrate for assistance and with the commander's assistance these questionable persons were seized and a party of police was ordered to patrol the areas at night accompanied by some soldiers. As a result, the Magistrate was reported to have received only a few complaints of theft in that quarter.

Later on, the situation again deteriorated and crimes round the outer edges of the Cantonment started multiplying. Hence, it was arranged in 1844 that there would be a Cantonment Joint Magistrate, obviously a member of the military, to enforce law and order more effectively in that area. The Cantonment Joint Magistrate was independent of the police management in the Cantonment area and handled such cases arising within his jurisdiction that he was competent to dispose of, but some cases were referred to the City Magistrate.[130]

EFFICIENCY OF THE POLICE QUESTIONED

In spite of various reforms introduced, crime did not stop substantially. This worried Commissioner Tucker so much that he wrote the following letter to Magistrate Lind on August 20, 1856, in which he forcefully urged the Magistrate to take all necessary steps for improving the situation. He observed : 'Government evidently considers the character and efficiency of the City police affected by the frequent mention of Benares as a principal haunt of bad characters.'[131]

The Commissioner also requested the Magistrate to let him know what measures the latter would propose for keeping a strict watch over the thieving gangs.[132] He also made the following suggestion :

> 'Most of them (criminals) must be known to the police, who, if they keep a strict watch over their proceedings, will surely be able to apprehend them under circumstances which will warrant either their imprisonment, or the demand for security, or at least make Benares too hot to hold them....
>
> It may be well to send for the Kotwal and impress upon him that this constant pointing of Benares as the focus of all the villainy going on, is far from creditable to him and his Naibs, and that he must really exert himself in earnest operations to detect and apprehend the scamps in acts sufficient for imprisonment.'[133]

One can easily presume that the resentment of the Commissioner

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against the Kotwal and the Police was also a resentment against the Magistrate himself, who was equally, if not more so, responsible for the law and order of the City than the Kotwal and the police officers under him.

We have already noted that Sleeman was consulted in 1856 regarding the Varanasi gang of thieves under Bhawani Pershad. At that time he was also asked about the preventive measures to be adopted in this regard. On June 25 of that year he suggested the employment of a few detectives selected from the District Police for this special duty. His argument was that with their superior local knowledge and general intelligence, they would most probably succeed in the detection and suppression of all such organized gangs in Varanasi.[134]

THE MAGISTRATE'S REACTION

In view of the aforementioned communications, Magistrate Lind wrote a letter[135] on October 4, 1856, in which he described the adverse circumstances against which the City's police force had to work, and the care they took in protecting the life and property of the people. In this letter he also claimed : 'The police of Benares are very efficient, I speak of the City police, and considering the very numerous disadvantages under which they labor, I think they deserve the greatest credit for their labors.' To support his view, he included information that stolen property had been recovered through the exertions of the police.[136]

The Magistrate also provided information about a new system[137] introduced by Pollock, an officer under him, with his sanction, to show that their efforts were unceasing in ensuring the safety of the residents. This device was simply a statement with an appropriate heading in which the names of the persons who might come up in any case as having had stolen property found in their possession were entered along with the plaintiffs' and defendants' names, etc. The majority of such people, of course, pleaded ignorance of the thefts, and there being no proof whatever against them, they were invariably released. In reality, however, these were most likely professional receivers. But the statement devised by Pollock, having an alphabetical index, would point out at once when the same man might be put on trial at some future time on the same charge. The peculiar coincidence of being one buying property that had been stolen on more than one occasion, would at once point him out as a general receiver, whereas the casual purchaser would at the same time be protected from suspicion.

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Regarding Sleeman's proposal for the employment of detectives, the Magistrate observed that very few of the police of this country were detectives and they were only serviceable in respect of the peculiar class of men with whom they had been in the habit of dealing. According to him : '...it would be too much to expect of detectives in this country where the distinctions of castes and the subdivisions of occupations are so minute when the famous London detectives are obliged to divide themselves and each study a peculiar line.'

He went on to say that so far as Varanasi was concerned, the police (of the place) were composed mostly of the residents of the neighbouring districts; and that they were 'men generally very good in their way but quite unacquainted with the habits of the residents of Central India or of the far northwest.' Hence they, the Magistrate continued, had experienced great difficulty in detecting thieves from honest men from among the fresh arrivals of pilgrims.

He rather suggested that the City sought to have a 'migratory' police force of a 'cosmopolitan' character, who could easily communicate with the spies who might readily be sent from Central India, the Dacoitee Commissoner's department or from any other place that circumstances might indicate.[138] These spies might make also 'unexpected visits' and ought, more especially, to be in the neighbourhoods of the City during the great bathing festivals. In such cases, the Magistrate of the City should always be informed privately of their approach. Thus, according to Lind, this type of police arrangement would 'likely to lead to useful results.'

ASSESSMENT OF THE LOCAL POLICE

We do not know what had happened with Lind's proposal, appearing to be a sound one, of the appointment of migratory police of a cosmopolitan character. But his claim that the Varanasi Police were very efficient and deserved the 'greatest credit' for their service was not very tenable. His claim was contradicted by his own report of 1856 (already referred to) which had conferred that there were police officers who took bribes. In view of the rise in crime, a contemporary journal of the City complained of the lack of supervision by the local administration, including the police, and urged the latter to be more vigilant in different issues of 1851.[139] The existence of a criminals-businessmen-police racket, also goes against the so-called good service record of the police.

But to be fair and just to the local police, it must be also admitted that

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in spite of some corruption and other lapses among some, there were definitely honest and dutiful burkundazes and officers too. These public servants no doubt rendered commendable service during the period of our study in maintaining law and order in a metropolis like Varanasi, which was highly susceptible to crime, first under Ali Ibrahim Khan and then his British successors. Again, the achievements of the Varanasi Police during this period appear substantial when we recall the utter lawlessness that had prevailed in the City preceding this period.

It is true that even the slightest relaxation of vigilance and initiative on the part of the police aggravated crime in Varanasi. But the police could not be held solely responsible for each and every failure of the City's law enforcement policies. With certain crimes, like stealing, it was alleged that the Courts failed to hand down stiffer penalties. One consequence of this leniency was that the recurrence of these crimes could not be effectively suppressed by the police.[140]

Administrative or judicial measures taken by the police or the courts alone would not deter people from committing crimes without a moral regeneration and better economic conditions for the people. As regards the habitual offender, nothing better could be expected until positive steps were taken for their reformation and rehabilitation and nothing of this nature was attempted during this period.

FEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The following details of establishment of the Fozdary Adalat of the City in 1837,[141] if compared with that in the early days of the British administration, would at once reveal that the workload of the court expanded enormously. This is evident from the numerous appointments of court personnel necessary to handle an increase in law suits owing to a rising population and crime rate. At the same time more citizens began turning to the new system of courts to settle disputes. Given here is administrative Court data revealing the nature of the work, personnel, salaries, etc.

Date of Appointment	Name	Job Description	Salary per month (Rs)
3 Sep. 1831	Degambar Banerjee	English writer	50
10 Jul. 1833	Julfiqar Ali	Dufftory	50
27 Sep. 1824	Deonath Singh	Sherestadar	50
3 Dec. 1829	Kursuhai (?)	Peshkar	40
16 Jan. 1828	Jorawounlal (?)	Muhurrir	20

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Date of Appointment	Name	Job Description	Salary per month (Rs)
15 Sep. 1804	Jumeeutlal	Muhurrir	15
27 Sep. 1834	Bulwant Roy	Do	15
3 Feb. 1830	Munsook Roy	Do	15
11 Jan. 1828	Hukumchund	Do	15
9 Jul. 1820	Manoharlal	Do	15
13 Dec. 1828	Chummanlal	Do	15
20 Nov. 1833	Gunput Rai	Do	15
16 Nov. 1836	Chunnilal	Mutsuddee (or Treasurer)	15
20 Oct .1833	Fyjoollah Khan	Record Keeper	30
Not known	Hakim Nozazeer Ali	Muhurrir	15
,,	Hurnarayan	Do	15
15 Jul. 1833	Mahomud Ali Khan	Nazir	25
Not known	Babulal	Naib Nazir	12
,,	Ramchurn	Muhurrir	7
,,	20	Chuprasees @Rs. 4/-	80
,,	Ramphul	Gangajullis	5
,,	Golam Rajah	Mollah Koranee	5

It appears from the above-mentioned post of English Writer that English also was made one of the languages of the Court. Again the posts of *Gangajulli* and *Mollah Koranee* indicate that the persons employed in these posts were in charge of swearing the Hindu and Muslim witnesses by the touching of holy Ganga water and the holy Koran respectively. Again, almost all of the staff of the Court were now Hindus, with but few exceptions.

As regards the legal system, the code of regulations for Bengal had been extended to Varanasi with little modification. This, as well as references to the celebrated pandits of the City in doubtful cases of interpretation of Hindu law, diminished the importance and necessity of Court-Pandits to a considerable extent.

Having considered the high esteem in which Brahmins were held by Hindus, and also according to Hindu legal codes, Brahmins enjoyed some prerogatives regarding the mode of proceedings against them and also in the degree of punishment handed down upon them. For example, in all cases, where, by law, the accused would be sentenced to capital punishment, if the guilty party were a Brahmin, the sentence could be reduced to transportation or could even be mitigated at the discretion of the Government. But, henceforth, the principle of equality before law, that is, indiscriminate treatment of all by the Courts, including the Brahmins, was introduced. Consequently, instances of excesses committed by Brahmins for personal gratification almost came to an end in Varanasi.[142]

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THE JAIL

Like other new establishments under the British Government, a suitably staffed jail was established mostly along the line of European prisons. The Government had also to take into consideration the special circumstances of this land while making arrangements for food and drink of the prisoners. This is known from a contemporary account of the jail, that will be quoted soon.

The following staff information of 1837 gives us an idea of the establishment of the City Jail during this period :[143]

Hingua Khan	Jailor	Rs 20/monthly
Kafaitullah	Naib of Jailor	" 15/- "
Sheikh Azeum	Native Doctor	" 10/- "
2	Muhurris @ Rs 7/-	" 14/- "
1	Blacksmith	" 6/- "

Though there is no mention of guards in this table, there were some posted here as becomes obvious from the following description of the jail.[144]

Captain Francis Egerton, who had visited the City in 1851, also visited both the jail and the lunatic asylum on 11 February of the same year. He leaves us the following general account along with his observations, providing a picture of the environs of the jail :[145]

'Business over, we went to see the Lunatic Asylum and the gaol. Both are widely different in their construction from similar buildings in England, of course, but the principle of conduct in both is the same. The gaol is made as nearly self supporting as possible.... The Doctor was kind enough to show us over both.... The gaol is laid out on a somewhat similar plan with the Asylum except that instead of separate cells, there are large strongly barred wards.

The prisoners had just returned from work on the roads, etc., and were cooking their meals at little fire places of clay, each having in front of it a little square hearth stone-like compartment for its owner to sit and eat....

In the gaol were about the nine hundred persons including two hundred women....

They work at various trades, and are allowed free communications with one another, the size of gaol and the nature of climate not allowing solitary or separate confinement; but the boys are kept in a ward to themselves. The women, who are, as usual in other gaols, the most difficult to manage, are obliged to spin a certain quantity of thread every day, or to go without certain allowances of food.

The majority of prisoners were in for theft, but there were more than a fair proportion of murder cases....

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We were attended round the gaol by some keepers and four guards with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, looking much more like the king's guards in an opera. The gaol guards are all dressed and armed like Prussian soldiers, substituting a cap for a shake, or helmet, and they never miss an opportunity of showing their military skill by presenting arms to Europeans whether in uniform or *mufti*....'

It has been hinted in the above description as well as in Chapter X that prisoners were largely employed as labour in public works, like road construction or the excavation of sites like Saranath. But this practice was later discontinued as convicts took advantage of the situation and managed to escape.[146]

Though prisoners were confined in an environment that was generally unfavourable to the adherence and practice of one's faith, the prisoners, interestingly enough, largely followed their respective socio-religious customs regarding eating, drinking and even the taking of medicine. For example, though Brahmin prisoners fell ill and some even suffered death, they would not accept medicine from the European physician.[147] Again, when an attempt was made to substitute the existing system of separate hearths for prisoners of different religious communities with the introduction of a common mess in 1852, this not only caused opposition from within the jail, but also triggered off such agitation outside the jail as well,[148] that the idea of a common mess had to be abandoned altogether.*

DISTURBANCES OF THE PEACE DURING 1794-1857

Now we shall deal with the incidents which created or tended to create a commotion, disturbing the peace and normalcy of the City during 1794-1857.**

Wazir Ali's Insurrection of 1799[149]

In 1797 when Asaf-ud-daula, the Nawab of Lucknow, passed away, his son Wazir Ali succeeded him to the throne at the insistance of the British Resident at Lucknow. But Wazir Ali, dethroned on account of his illegitimate birth and his alleged bad conduct, was soon replaced by Saadat Ali Khan, the eldest brother of the late Asaf-ud-daula, by the British Resident.

Wazir Ali was removed to Varanasi and accommodated at the garden-house of Madho Das where Warren Hastings had once been put up during his seizure of the City. The deposed Nawab was then granted an annual

* For details, see Chapter XX.

** See also Chapter XX.

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pension of one and a half lakh rupees. With Wazir Ali came a large body of armed followers, as he lived in the style of a reigning prince. Here he was reported to have been constantly conspiring with Zaman Shah of Kabul and other dissenting Muslim chiefs of Bengal and elsewhere. Magistrate Samuel Davis, suspecting Wazir Ali of rebellious design, persuaded G.F. Cherry, the then Resident to recommend the removal of the former Nawab to Calcutta. After vehement remonstrance, Wazir Ali seemed to have acceded to his removal from Varanasi.

Before his departure he had paid a state visit to the Resident Cherry on January 14, 1799, when a retinue of nearly two hundred armed men accompanied him. During the meeting with Cherry, Wazir Ali was said to have complained of the former's ill-treatment with him and suddenly struck the Resident with his sword while one of his attendants seized the victim from behind. The Resident struggled to escape but was killed instantly along with three other British officers who were present.

Meanwhile, Magistrate Davis, knowing that designs were being made to raise the district into rebellion, sent a note to the Resident without knowing anything about the latter's assassination. Suddenly, Davis discovered that Wazir Ali and his followers were approaching his residence and had shot his sentry down. Davis immediately sent his wife and son to the roof and himself stood in defence with a spear at the entrance to the trap-door leading to the roof. The only approach to that place was by a narrow spiral staircase enabling only a single person to ascend at a time and the attackers could not fire because of the curve of the staircase. Davis faced them single-handed and succeeded in disabling two who had attempted to make the climb up. This made the others hesitant and the party finally withdrew from the house after nearly an hour. Wazir Ali and his followers, in collaboration with other like-minded people of the City, then set the European quarter at Secrole on fire and finally retired to Madho Das's garden-house.

The authorities also did not sit idly by but brought in infantry from the old cantonment at Betabar. The force, having suffered some losses, stormed Wazir Ali's residence by blowing up the gate only to find that Wazir had already left the place. He had set out for Azamgarh along with his family and horsemen, while his infantry followed him at night.

The next day some of the distinguished nobles of the locality, including the Maharaja of Varanasi, and the Delhi Prince residing at Shivala, met with Davis to prove their allegiance to the British. But some

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among the Raja's relatives, for example, Baboo Jagat Singh, were accused of being involved in Wazir Ali's attempted insurrection.*

Among others accused of treason, Bhavani Shankar of Chitaipur was captured and executed after trial; but Shivnath and his friend, Bhangad Bhikshu, did not submit to the British and died a hero's death while resisting British forces. Thus, the tumult in the City was put down and normalcy was restored. The location where Shivnath was killed during this historical encounter with the British is familiar as Shiv Singh ki Chori and Shivanath has been respectfully remembered as a martyr to the present day.

Meanwhile, Wazir Ali left Azamgarh and went to Nepal. Finally, after fleeing to Rajasthan, he was surrendered to the British by the Raja of Jaipur. On the anniversary of his insurrection, Wazir Ali was brought to Varanasi as a captive and finally sent to Vellore via Calcutta. It was in Vellore, far distant from his native state, that the restless soul of this undaunted and ambitious Nawab found eternal rest in death.

Hindu-Muslim Riots of 1805 & 1809

In 1805, when an attempt was made by the Muslims to topple and defile the pillar called Lat Bhimsen and the images at Lat Imambara worshipped by the Hindus, a violent confrontation broke out. This, however, was brought under control by W. W. Bird, the then Magistrate.

In 1809, another Hindu-Muslim conflict erupted over the same issue, which soon expressed itself in severe communal riots that were suppressed with great difficulty.**

'Ghar Chhaḍi' or House Tax Movement of 1810

When the British authority of the City made a move to implement Regulation XV of 1810 calling for a House Tax to be levied upon the citizens, the residents adamantly denounced it and adopted various means of lodging protests against it, the most important of which was sitting in *dhurna*. Tensions were gradually coming to a head and the situation became so serious that it could have turned violent at any moment. This state of chaos and confusion continued until the aggrieved citizens were pacified by the authority by allowing a deduction of the tax imposed by that Regulation equal to the amount of the *Chaukidari* assessment levied by the inhabitants themselves as per Regulation XXVIII of 1795.***

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* For further details, see Baboo Jagat Singh in Chapter XVIII.

** For details, see Chapter V.

*** For details, see Chapters X and XX.

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Dissension among the Jainas

The Jainas were not very numerous in the City and they were divided in two sects that held each other in great abhorrence. On the eve of Bishop Heber's visit in 1824, these opposing groups were out in arms on the streets of Varanasi. This potentially dangerous affray did not escalate, however, due to the timely intervention of the authorities.[150]

The Police-Soldier Confrontations of 1832

The European soldiers belonging to the Benares Cantonment consumed unlimited quantities of alcohol, which resulted in 'mischievous consequences' like the humiliating and torturing of innocent residents of the City. This consumption of spirits, reported Acting Magistrate Hamilton, on September 22, 1825, affected 'the discipline and health of European troops'. Hence, he issued a sweeping order prohibiting all shopkeepers of Varanasi from selling liquor to European soldiers. He also urged the Governor-General to compel European shopkeepers 'to enter into some penal engagements and an express prohibition inserted in their licenses' as well.

Examples of undisciplined conduct by the European soldiers and even some of their superior officers, which expressed itself on different occasions, were sometimes imitated by their Indian counterparts. The latter also behaved tumultuously on certain occasions like fairs and festivals. Consequently, these led to a series of encounters between local police and soldiers, as the police, entrusted with maintaining law and order in the City, restrained soldiers from behaving mischievously and even arrested them in cases of excess. These acts would not be tolerated by the soldiers who sought every opportunity to take vengeance upon the insolence of police. Such episodes caused serious breaches of peace in the City, which will be evident from the following account of 1832.

On October 3, 1832, by the Magistrate's order, Ganesh Sahay, *muhurir* of Thanah Jagat Ganj, Devidayal, *thanahdar* of Kalbhyro, and Mahmed Buksh, *jemadar* to the Magistrate were engaged in superintending the *mela* at Chowka Ghat, preventing breaches of the peace and keeping the Raj Ghat Road clear for the passage of 'Gentlemen's buggies'. Suddenly, a commotion broke out between Brijlal Singh, *amildar* of the 6th Company 54th Regiment and Kulloo Khan, a *burkundaze*, when the amildar, having seized the stick of the latter, would not let it go. At this, about 150 other soldiers attending the mela assembled with sticks and *sohbundahs*(?), and

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having beaten Nutteh Khan, jemadar of Teliabagh and Ramsahay and Debee Pande, burkundazes of Jagat Ganj, and others, made off. Later, Brijlal Singh, in possession of a policeman's stick , Gunesh, a soldier of the 4th Company, Takoor, a soldier of the 1st Company,—all of the 54th Regiment, were seized by the police. None of the rest of the offending soldiers could be captured by rallying police forces in consequence of a showering of bricks and clod and the arrested soldiers were sent to the Magistrate that very evening.

This event was followed by another undisciplined act by local soldiers in the same year, prompting a reprimand of an Army Officer by the Magistrate.[151]

Magistrate's Letter of Warning to Commanding Officer

Upon this last incident, D. B. Morrison, the Acting Magistrate, wrote the following letter to Colonel Fast, Commanding Officer, Benares Division, on October 9, 1832, throwing further light on similar types of incidents :[152]

> 'I beg to inform you that sepoys, not in large bands but 2, 3 and 4 together, are still in the habit of going about in the night both in and around City.... Their evident intention is to have their revenge upon any of the police they come across and it is in these peregrinations that occurrences like that which forms the subject of this letter take place. The consequence is that such a panic has struck the men that it was with difficulty I got them to go to Capt. Bayldon's quarters this morning for fear of what might happen to them hereafter—a fear in which they participate in common with the other shopkeepers and bye-standers directed to attend the inquiry now carrying on. It is impossible for the offenders to be recognized as they are total strangers to the rest of the community both in habit, profession, and place of general residence....'

In this same letter to Colonel Fast, the Magistrate also warned :[153]

> '...the only remaining way to effectually check the matter, if the measures you have taken to effect that object fail, will be for me to direct their (the sepoys) seizure when found so wandering about—an order which will to a certainty be attended with bloodshed. But if it comes to the worst, I must run the risk of that rather than suffer the police under me to become useless and contemptible in the eyes of the inhabitants of the City, or acknowledge my inability to afford protection to peaceable and inoffensive men on the public road and as it were close under my own eye.'

Possibly, this reprimand was given serious consideration and the soldiers concerned were disciplined, but that such incidents by soldiers did not stop altogether becomes apparent from the following account of 1846.

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The Police-Soldier Confrontation of 1846 and its Sequel[154]

In a confrontation in 1846, the incidents that followed were far more serious than those that had occurred in 1832. The date was 30 September and the occasion was the triumphal procession of Lord Rama's chariot, which had been brought out as a part of the Ramlila. An immense crowd had collected in the open space where four roads met opposite one Sheola Dube's garden. It being near the Cantonment, a large group of soldiers, numbering about five hundred (estimated by one Sergeant Sharpe), also attended to witness the procession. Suddenly, the soldiers pressed round the chariot to the entire exclusion of the people of the City. They began behaving in a disorderly and boisterous manner heedless of the remonstrances from the Brahmin attendant of the deity and of the police authorities. According to the Magistrate's report, the soldiers then proceeded so far as to plunder the baskets of the flower-sellers and the shops of sweetmeat dealers.

However, the soldiers were ordered to stand back and form a ring, and the police burkundazes received orders from their officers to push the soldiers back. In the execution of this order, some of the soldiers were, of course, jostled. Upon this, some four or five of the soldiers resisted and then knocked one Sheonarayan, a policeman, down and beat him, tearing his clothes and struggling to deprive him of his sword. They succeeded only in possessing themselves of the sheath and left the sword in his hand. Then being enraged at this, Sheonarayan flailed the blade about him wounding two of the soldiers. The Kotwal of the City was on the spot and in an instant he disarmed the policeman. At this point almost all the soldiers left the *mela.* It was about sunset, the procession and mela shortly afterwards being dispersed, the police officers went on to their respective posts leaving the site desolated.

That same evening, a performance of a *nach*, or dance, was going on in Babu Jankee Das's (a *rais* of the City) garden-house. At about 9.30 p. m., a large body of about fifty armed soldiers, came and posted themselves outside the garden-house in twos and threes. Then a body of fifteen soldiers rushed the large northern gateways of the garden and another three took up post as guards. These three soldiers indiscriminately cut down every soul they encountered. But attempts by the main body of soldiers to break into the dancing room were foiled as the batten doors had been closed and bolted at the alarm being raised. This barricade, however,

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would hardly have arrested the progress of the intruding assailants had not there happened to be among the guests three Europeans named Cooper, Callaghan and Sergeant Sharpe, who came out and resisted them, finally, stopping the soldiers who then retired to the Cantonment.

Afterwards, one Imam Baksh was found lying dead near the garden gate along with six others, very severely wounded, among whom, one burkundaze later expired. This incident naturally caused great consternation and alarm among the police and also among the local people.

While reporting this incident to E. P. Smith, the Commissioner, on November 17, 1846, M. C. Ommaney, the Acting Magistrate, expressed his confusion about the real motives of the miscreant soldiers, writing :

> 'There can be no doubt that the occurrences of the evening during the Ramlila (fair) provided the attack (of the sepoys) at night on Jankee Dass's garden. Still it is unaccountable to me, if the sepoys were wronged by the police, why they stained their revenge on unoffending innocent people. The stations of the police are well-known and opposite the garden is the post of a *Jemadar* and four (police), who it would be expected, would have been an object of attack. Again, the attempt to gain the inside of the dancing room from the outside induces a suspicion that their object was plunder.'

In the same letter, though the Magistrate admitted that it was 'very possible that in executing the orders of the Kotwal, the policemen exhibited a want of tact and consideration' during events of the festival, he held the soldiers actually responsible for the confrontations that had taken place during the *mela*.

Repeated instances of such mischief committed by the unruly soldiers in the City, which accounts for a bad reflection on both the soldiers and their officers of the local British cantonment left a terrorizing effect on the residents of Varanasi in general.

Mass Agitation on the Issue of Weights—Reforms in 1842

Davidson, the officiating Magistrate of Benares, issued an order on November 2, 1841, regarding the standardization of weights in the different bazars of the City. This order was reversed in consequence of an appeal to the Session Judge. Next, the case was mooted to the Nizamat Adalut, which did not pass any clear judgement on this issue. It is in this background that on 11 November of the next year, a mass agitation took place in the City.* The Magistrate's order was finally repealed and the situation was brought under control.

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* For details, see Chapter XX.

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Explosion of the Gunpowder Loaded in Boats in 1850

Though this explosion was not reported to have taken place in consequence of any sabotage or any offensive motive, it seriously affected the City and caused great loss of life and damage to property, both public and private. The details of the accident are as follows :

In April 1850, a fleet of boats manned by 500 sailors loaded with 3,000 barrels of gunpowder and other articles was proceeding from Calcutta to Allahabad when it was detained at Varanasi. On 1 May, there was an explosion in that fleet that caused death or injury to 348 individuals and property damage of about Rs. 17,000 (?) according to an official estimate. It was conjectured that immediately preceding the accident the powder-boats had been approached by a steam-driven pinnace, a spark from which caused the explosion.

The Acting Magistrate of the City reported on May 13, 1850, that 169 boats had been demolished and 135 damaged.[155] Of the boats destroyed, 34 contained the following Government military stores :[156] 3000 barrels of gunpowder, 6000 shot and shells, 16 guns,14 muskets, 2 carriages. The articles recovered after the blast included : 5847 shot and shells, 16 guns,13 muskets, 2 carriages.

In addition to the above-mentioned boats, there were 34 country-boats all of which belonged to Messers Crump and Co. containing beer and 23 more boats loaded with sugar, charcoal, wood, etc. The Magistrate reported that after the explosion every assistance was given by the police to recover the property.

A little more than a year after the explosion took place, Francis Egerton, a British traveller, witnessed the site of explosion from the minaret of the Venimadhav (Aurangzeb Mosque) leaving following description :[157]

> 'The site of the explosion is plainly visible from here (the minaret).The whole bank of the river (a cliff seventy feet high) for a long distance, between two and three hundred yards, has been broken down by it (explosion). A great ghat existed there, but there are no signs of it remaining. In fact, it is nothing but a chaos of ruin and broken ground, even now, more than a year since the occurrence. Government has, however, come down handsomely, and the neighbouring houses are gradually being rebuilt. The loss of life I heard, as estimated by a resident, is at least seven hundred souls, though it never will be ascertained for certain, as (during) the time of the occurrence, an immense number of people from all parts of India were sleeping at the *ghaut* opposite, every soul of whom perished. Several Europeans also suffered, among them the wife of a missionary, who was killed by the violence with which a

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door was forced against her head. As usual too in occurrences of this nature, there were some providential and extra-ordinary escapers.'

The Government appointed a committee consisting of E. A. Rende, Major W. M. Stewart and Lieutenant C. K. Dickins for settling cases of compensation to be granted to the afflicted persons. The committee was reported to have undertaken and completed its work with zeal, promptitude and good judgement.[158]

Whatever the official view may be, the *Kashivartaprakashika*, in its issue of 15 June 1851, made a very significant comment on the subject of this gunpowder explosion by way of criticising European attitudes toward the 'natives'. The paper remarked that it had been an open secret in the City that the said explosion had taken place in consequence of the negligence of the European officers. This comment, holding the European Officers responsible, cannot be ignored because firstly, the chances of publishing utterly false and baseless criticisms against British Officers were remote; and, secondly, it has been verified on more than one occasion that the editor of this paper had practised responsible journalism throughout.

This accident was commemorated by a beautiful poem in Hindi entitled 'Peepa Baoni' composed by Pandit Loknath Chaturvedi of Varanasi, who described the explosion in fifty-two verses.[159]

The Kali Andhi or Black Storm of 1851

In 1851, the City witnessed a natural catastrophe in the form of a black storm , known as *Kali Andhi* in the local tradition, which also affected the lives of residents.[160]

Mass Agitation upon the Introduction of a General Jail Mess in 1852

The prisoners in the jail, as we have already mentioned, would cook their meals separately. According to the Magistrate's report, in view of want of fuel he had told the Darogah of the jail to ask some of the Muslim convicts to mess together and show its exemplary benefit to others. But a rumour spread thoughout the City that all the prisoners were being converted to Christianity by forcing them to eat English bread and anyone refusing to eat were compelled to do so by the police. In consequence, a mass agitation, popularly known as *Gauriya Shahi* erupted.* The agitation was quelled, however, by the Government within a short period.

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* For details, see Chapter XX.

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Agitation at Madanpura in 1853[161]

The Madanpura Mahalla was almost entirely inhabited by Muslim weavers, a class of men who, according to Gubbins, the Magistrate of the City in 1853, were 'inclined to give four times as much trouble to the Police as the same mumber of Hindoos.' Gubbins also comments in this regard : 'The late Naeb Kotwal who, it may be noted, was a Muslim, had his eye on several of the worst characters of this quarter and was under Mr. Pollock's directions watching his opportunity to pounce upon them on the first occasion of their breaking the Law.'

The following are the details of a confrontation that took place between a group of Muslims of Madanpura and the police :

On Sunday, November 6, 1853, a quarrel ensued between two individuals of the caste of weaver of Madanpura, in which one man stabbed the other with a dagger. The wounded man ran bleeding to the Thanah. At this, the then Naeb Kotwal proceeded to the spot accompanied by some burkundazes and choukidars. Upon arriving at the house where the quarrel had occurred he found that the culprit had concealed himself in the upper storey where the women of the family were living. According to the official report, there was no *purdah* among the local Muslim weavers and that 'all their women, unless young and good looking, were allowed to go about the streets with their faces uncovered.'

Some time was allowed by the Naeb Kotwal for the culprit to come down from the upper story, but as time elapased and as, the Magistrate reported, there was no purdah among the weavers there, the Naeb Kotwal proceeded upstairs and was said, by the women present there, to have broken open a door and to have struck one of them. At this, two of the women climbed out to a projecting ledge of the window and jumped into the street below, a fall of about seven feet.

Meanwhile, the culprit had also crawled out of the window and jumped into the street, there to be seized and taken to the Naeb Kotwal. Some evidence was then taken down by the police and a search was instituted for the knife with which the murder had been committed. But during this course of events, the weaver population of the neighbourhood had been worked up into a frenzy on hearing that their women were being disgraced and they began forming a large, angry crowd outside the house.

Soon the weavers broke into the house and attacked the police. The Naeb Kotwal had kept his ground till someone from above threw a *ghurra*

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(a pitcher) filled with earth at his head and he fell down. Ultimately the battle was lost and the mob attacked and killed the Naeb Kotwal striking him with beams, daggers and everything they could get their hands on. Four of the five burkundazes who had been with him till the last were severely handled by the weavers, but the rest of them fled away.

At 7 p.m. intelligence was brought to Magistrate Gubbins describing what was going on when he gallopped to the scene. There he was shortly joined by two more European officers named Pollock and Lewis. Moreover, a good number of police had also mobilized. The police then took the precaution to shut and guard the gate of the mahalla to prevent the escape of the miscreants. Meanwhile, all the houses of the locality had been barricaded by Muslim residents. Hence, the Magistrate and his battalion had to break down doors to arrest those who could be identified by the police as having been involved in the onslaught.

Forty-four individuals, who were clearly proved to have either struck the police or to have taken part in various other ways were committed to the sessions. Among them, there were also seven or eight persons identified as the ringleaders and were witnessed to have struck and murdered the Naeb Kotwal.

No major disturbances broke out in the City after 1853 until 1857 when the Indian Revolt erupted with major consequences, including the superseding of the British East India Company by the British Parliament under the Crown with regard to the rule of India.

OBSERVATIONS ON DISTURBANCES OF PEACE

Among the thirteen incidents reported above, except the accidental explosion of gunpowder and the black storm, a natural catastrophe, three of these disturbances originated from the demand of the people for the repeal of certain rules or acts of Government and three were religious disputes. Among the remaining cases, one arose from an alleged interference in religious practices, one from the alleged dishonouring of women, one from the political ambitions of a chief and one from the indisciplined conduct of the soldiers of the local cantonment.

From the point of dimension and duration, the Hindu-Muslim confrontations of 1909, the House Tax Movement of 1910, and the disturbances following the introduction of the mess in the prison were most remarkable for having affected the entire City for a considerable period. Wazir Ali's insurrection, although limited to his followers and the

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Government and continuing for only a short period, was, however, no less serious an event, as its political nature and violent expression gave a tremendous blow to the prestige of the Government.

The local administration tackled most of the situations arising out of the said disturbances successfully by a judicious and prompt application of strength and tactfulness, patience and sympathy, for which the former definitely deserves credit. Had the Government failed to handle situations like Wazir Ali's insurrection or House Tax Movement intelligently, they could have given greater trouble to the British Paramountcy and caused greater disorder in the City. It also deserves mention that while facing these situations, the City administration always received the prompt, ungrudging and active assistance of the local cantonment in accordance with the higher authority's directives.

RELIGION *vis-à-vis* LAW AND ORDER

The scenarios of the law and order depicted above seem to indicate that the crime-world of Varanasi was no less extensive or terrifying than that of any other city in the modern world. It would seem a paradoxy, if not an irony, to some that it could be so in a city like Varanasi, the chief religious centre of India. Historically speaking, religion has always been resorted to by people of both noble and evil motives. Similarly, a location or city of religious significance has also attracted the virtuous and wicked alike, and Varanasi was certainly no exception.

STANDARD OF PUBLIC MORALITY

At this point in our discussion the question of general standard of public morality during the period under review is pertinent, and the answer would be that, excepting a section of miscreants, the commoners maintained a commendable standard of morality and discipline.

European travellers to Varanasi and the Christian Missionaries residing here, who were otherwise critical of Varanasi, admitted that the majority of its citizens were moral, law-abiding and religious-minded. While visiting a fair in the City, sometime in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Reverend Buyers, a Christian missionary, was struck with wonder to observe how the people, unlike their counterparts taking part in carnivals in the West, were jubilant and made fun without being intoxicated by alcohol consumption.[162] Malachowski, a Polish traveller to the City, also had the same impression.[163]

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TRANSFORMATION OF MISCREANTS

Miscreants here possessed a strange and deep faith in God in the form of Lord Shiva, who is believed to be all merciful and compassionate to his devotees—good or bad. This character trait led to contradictions in mental and behavioural patterns, producing in them something akin to split-personalities. Nevertheless, their regard for Lord Shiva and holy men sometimes paved the way for a moral transformation and induced some to lead noble and virtuous lives. Some *pandas*, for instance, notorious for various misdeeds, were totally changed having come into spiritual contact with Swami Bhaskarananda Saraswati, the renowned monk of the City.[164] Such cases were not rare in Varanasi.

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APPENDIX

(a) Deposition of Bhugwan Doss Sonareah (resident of Mouza Bheer of Banpoor)

Q. Do the police of Benares know of this (that is, the real identity of Beerbul and his connection with the *buneahs*)?

A. I do not know, but hear from the tribe that they (the police) know all about it and receive a share of the proceeds.

Q. Does Beerbul go out himself to the *melas* to thieve?

A. Yes. He is a *Jemadar* or *Mokeah* and visits the fairs, etc. ... with his gang, but he does not actually steal himself with his own hands—no Mokeah ever does. They employ boys for this work.

Q. Is there any other Sonareah resident at Benares?

A. No.

Q. How many Sonareahs do you think pass through Benares annually on the road to Gaya, Patna, Danapoor, Calcutta, etc.?

A. About 150 Sonareahs altogether visit that part of India from Tehree and Banpoor and a 100 or so from Dutteah.

Q. How many go to Bombay, Gujarat, Vandeish (Khandesh), etc.?

A. About 40 or 50 visit Gujarat; 40 or 50 to Karnatak and about 30 go to Khandesh.

Q. How many Sonareahs do you suppose there are altogether in Bundelkund?

A. Not less than 2,000 in all in the Banpoor, Tehree, Dutteah and Shagurh states.

Q. Do the native chiefs take their share in the plunder?

A. Not exactly their share, but they take costly or valuable articles as their *nuzzur*.

Q. Have you ever been to Calcutta or Madras?

A. I have been to Calcutta and Bombay, but never to Madras.

Q. Do you always give the police a present or how is it you are so seldom caught?

A. We pay the police when anyone is caught and if they are not willing to release the party and wink at our offences, we leave the place and go to some other field.

(b) Deposition of Dereaw Sonareah (resident at Mouzah Unnorah of Tehree)

Q. Do the Kotwal and Burkundazee know of this (that is, the actual identity of Beerbul)?

A. The Chowkeedars and Burkundazes who are about the river ghats all know about it and they get a rupee or two now and then. I do not know about the Kotwal.

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Q. Do not the town people of Benares suspect Beerbul?

A. No. They think he is merely a shopkeeper.The Sonareahs who go to him always go at night and leave very early in the morning.

Q. Is Beerul looked upon as a man of substance and respectability by those who do not know him to be a thief?

A. Yes.... And those who do not know what he really is, think him respectable. I consider him simply a Sonareah thief.

(c) Deposition of Gureeby Sonoreah (Informer in the pay of Government and a resident of Mouza Hurpoora of Tehree)

Q. Do the police know anything of this, that is, the affairs of Sonareahs and Beerbul ?

A. I have no doubt (policemen) who are stationed near his street and house do (know). About 3 years or so ago Rajah of Benares was robbed of 4000 rupees worth of property and Beerbul's house, I believe, was searched but nothing was found. The property, however, all went to Beerbul and he would not give any one a share. At this last Kotak (month of Kartik ?) during the Ramlila (festival) a silver vessel for oil was stolen by one of Beerbul's gang. It belonged to the Rajah also.

Q. How do you know all this ?

A. The news of all these things travels here regularly and I hear through whom and by whom the principal things are stolen. I get this type of news from Madras, Bombay, Calcutta and in fact from every quarter.

Q. Do you know to whom Beerbul sells the stolen property he gets from the Sonareahs?

A. I do not know their names; but I remember the shop of one to whom I sold some thing I had stolen myself.

Q. At what melas near Benares do the Sonareahs assemble?

A. The Ramlila, the Boorwahmungal, the Dusserah, and, in fact, at all the feasts and fairs.

Q. If informers were sent to Benares every season, do you think the Sonareahs would be arrested in numbers?

A. Yes, and they would be caught in large numbers at the Hoole (Holi).

Q. Do the Sonareahs when captured give false names?

A. Yes. They do not give their proper names or those of their fathers or places of residence....

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CHAPTER XX

CIVIL MOVEMENTS

THE PSYCHE OF THE BANARASIS

In the previous chapter we have recorded that the residents of Varanasi, in general, were a gentle, peace-loving and law-abiding people. There were also occasions, however, when popular reaction to issues of public interest caused serious civil unrest in the City. These public movements against perceived injustices or irresponsible acts of the authorities are indicative of the residents' independent spirit, yet, unity amongst themselves, as well as their sensitivity to socio-economic and, especially, religious issues. Accounts of such civil movements follow :

DESCRIPTIONS OF CIVIL MOVEMENTS

The Sanitation Movement

Etymologically, *hurtal*, a Gujarati word, means 'closure of shops'.[1] Resorting to hurtal to redress grievances constituted one of the traditional strategies of the civil movements in this region. The first recorded hurtal in Varanasi during British rule took place in 1790 and was followed by a series of movements of a similar nature. The details of this hurtal are as follows :[2]

A vast multitude of 'lower class' people assembled on the outskirts of the City on the afternoon of August 24, 1790, with a view to procuring the repeal of a regulation for keeping the City clean that included 'public necessaries' (toilets). Protestors had first appealed to Nawab Ali Ibrahim, the Magistrate in charge of implementation, for the act's repeal, but he did not entertain their appeal. On the contrary, he reported to Jonathan Duncan, the Resident, that the measures he had taken for enforcing this regulation were 'exceedingly mild, gentle and gradual' and 'extended to only males'.

Nevertheless, as previously planned, agitators called upon all local businessmen and shopkeepers to close their shops to 'effect what is known in this country under the name of hurtal, or a complete stoppage of

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business of every kind, threatening to plunder and rob those who should dare to act otherwise.' Most businessmen responded to this threat by closing their doors, but at the insistence and vigilance of the Magistrate, some essential shops were kept open. Upon later interrogation it was learned from the aggrieved that they had apprehended that the use of such 'necessaries' would cause hardship to them. Another cause of their remonstrance, which was also regarded as genuine by the Government, was that the 'whole thing was a novelty' which had disturbed and made them apprehensive.[3]

Having considered all the circumstances of the case, however, the Resident told the agitators that he would consent to reverse the regulation, with a few qualifications.[4] The agitators were satisfied at this declaration and more so when the Resident assured them that no step would be taken for 'what had hitherto been perpetrated.' The leaders then left the place dismissing the mob who 'thereupon returned with shouting their thanks and rejoicing'.[5]

Rioters who had been seized were then released at the request of Derew Singh, one of the protest leaders and a worker in the mint, perhaps residing in the Dashashwamedh area.[6] Ticket Singh, *naib* to one Premanand, was among those who had been seized and released.[7]

The involvement of such persons as Derew Singh and Ticket Singh, as well as tradesmen in the movement, does not corroborate the official view that the agitators were simply a congregation of the lower classes; rather, it proves that it was a movement of citizens belonging to various classes of people though with 'lower class' majority.

The House Tax Movement

Among all the movements the City witnessed during the period under review, the one that assumed the greatest dimension was the House Tax Movement of 1810. The circumstances under which this movement gained momentum are that over and above services provided through a general taxation imposed by the Government as a part of *Phatakbandi* System, the City had maintained a unique system of sanitation by which the expense of local cleaning was borne by the residents themselves.*

The highest authority in Calcutta insisted again and again on replacing this Phatakbandi System with the *Chowkidari* System, which meant a general imposition of tax upon all, irrespective of the benefit derived by

* For details, see Chapter X.

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individuals. This left little scope for the flexibilities enjoyed under phatakbandi. The local administration was well aware that any alteration to the existing mode of assessment would only be 'viewed with jealousy and distrust' by residents, who had already expressed objections to such a general assessment in 1806 and again in 1808.[8]

Ignoring this, the Government declared that a House Tax would be levied in Varanasi. This implied that every house within the City would be taxed for receiving sanitation services and the like. This at once infuriated the people who united and launched a movement against the authorities.

Bishop Heber, having visited the City within two decades of this movement, leaves the following detailed account, including the history of the origin, development and consequences of the movement on the basis of information received by him :[9]

> 'Government had unadvisedly imposed a house tax of a very unpopular character, both from its amount and from its novelty. To this the natives objected that they recognized in their British rulers the same rights which had been exercised by the Moguls, that the land-tax was theirs, and they could impose duties on commodities going to market, or for exportation; but that their houses were their own, that they had never intermeddled with it any but their landed property, and commodities used in traffic, and that the same power which now imposed a heavy and unheard of tax on their dwellings, might do the same next year on their children and themselves. These considerations, though backed by strong representations from the magistrates, produced no effect in Calcutta; on which the whole population of Benares and its neighbourhood determined to sit *dhurna* till their grievances were redressed. It was done with a great resolution, and surprising concert and unanimity. Some of the leading Brahmins sent written handbill to the wards in Benares nearest the College and to some of the adjoining villages, declaring very shortly the causes and necessity of the measures which they were about to adopt, calling on all lovers of their country and national creed to join in it, and commanding, under many bitter curses, every person who received it to forward it to his next neighbour. Accordingly, it flew over the country like the fiery cross in the "Lady of the Lake", and three days after it was issued, and before Government were in the least apprised of the plan, above 300,000 persons, as it is said, deserted their houses, shut up their shops, suspended the labour of their farms, forbore to light fires, dress victuals, many of them even to eat, and sat down with folded arms and drooping heads on the plain which surrounds Benares.
>
> The local Government were exceedingly perplexed as there was the chance that very many of the agitators would really perish, either from their obstinacy, or the diseases which they would contract in their present situation. There was a probability that famine would ensure from the interruption of agricultural labours at the most critical time of the year. There was a certainty that the revenue would suffer very materially from the cessation of all traffick. And it might even be apprehended

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that their despair, and the excitements occasioned by such a display of physical force would lead them to far stronger demonstrations of discontent than that of sitting dhurna. On the other hand, the authorities of Benares neither were permitted, nor would it have been expedient, to yield to such a demand, so urged. They conducted themselves with great prudence and good temper. Many of the natives appeared to expect, and the Brahmins perhaps hoped, that they (the authorities) would still further outrage the feelings of the people, by violently suppressing their assemblings. They did no such thing, but coolly reasoned with some of the ring leaders on the impossibility that Government should yield to remonstrances so enforced. They however told them expressly, in answer to their enquiries, that if they chose to sit dhurna it was their own affair, and so long as they only injured themselves, and were peaceable in their behaviour to others, Government would not meddle with them. They did not omit, however, to bring a strong body of Europeans from Dinapoor and Ghazeepoor, to the neighbouring cantonment, without appearing to watch the conduct of the natives, or putting it into their heads that they suspected them of violent intentions.

At last the multitude began to grow very hungry, and a thunder shower which fell made them wet, cold and uncomfortable. Some of the party proposed a change of operations and that a deputation of 10,000 should be sent to address the Governor-General personally. This was eagerly carried heartily by a majority tired of their situation, and the next question was, how these men should be maintained during their journey? When one leading Brahmin proposed a tax on houses a string was here struck which made the whole instrument jar; "A tax on houses. If we are to pay a tax on house after all, we might as well have remained on good terms with our Government, sitting under our vines and fig trees, and neither hungry nor rheumatic". A great number caught at the excuse for a rupture and rose to go home, but the remainder determined that all should go to the Governor, every man at his own charge. The seeds of disunion were already sown and the majority absented themselves from the muster which was held three days after. From ten to twenty thousand, however, really assembled with such provisions as they could collect and began their march, still unmolested by the magistrate, whose whole conduct was wise and merciful; they well calculated that provisions would soon fall short and travelling become wearisome, and merely watched their notions at some distance with a corps of cavalry. They knew that hunger would make them plunder and that the hilly and jungly road from Benares to the neighbourhood of Burdwan, afforded few facilities for the subsistence of so great a multitude. Accordingly, in a few days they melted away to so small a number, that the remainder were ashamed to proceed.'

Upon a further petition, the Government finally revised the order with regard to the general tax and granted some relief. Thus ended a disturbance which, 'if it had been harshly or improperly managed, might have put all India in a flame'.[10]

Price Increase : A Mass Petition

On April 10, 1826, three or four merchants met James Prinsep, the

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Assay Master of Benares and Secretary to the Committee of Local Improvement for Benares, requesting his advice and assistance in transmitting their *urzees* or petition on the price of grain to 'such public authority as could take cognizance of the subject of their application'.[11] This petition was signed by many, including respectable citizens of Varanasi.[12]

The petitioners complained that the price of grain in the many markets of the City was higher than what it ought to be when compared to the price of grain in the country. According to them, this was owing to a monopoly which, though strictly forbidden by a Government enactment, still existed and 'existed with more audacity under the avowed rule of Government not to interfere with markets excepting for the purpose of keeping them open and free to all vendors'.[13] The petitioners prayed that somebody should be appointed by the Government to look after these markets and fix a daily assize.

The above allegations were particularly true in the case of Trilochan Ghat, where there was the great imported corn mart. The Government even relinquished the duties which were collected here upon boats. Traders were forbidden to take possession of the ground along the ghat which was supposed to serve as an open landing for grain unloaded from boats and sold with all the benefit of competition. It was complained that though the magistracy should have interfered and prevented the setting up of shops upon the ghat, it was not done because of alleged collusion between certain police officers and traders.[14]

The petition was placed before the Committee for discussion and upon consideration of the minutes from James Prinsep and W. A. Brooke (also a member of the Committee), it was resolved to refer the matter to the Magistrate, as the subject of the petition was beyond Committee jurisdiction.[15] Unfortunately, further records regarding the outcome of this matter could not be found.

Weight Reform Movement[16]

Davidson, the officiating Magistrate of Benares, issued an order in November 1841 to equalize the standard of weights in the different bazars of the City. This order remained in force for several months until a petition was presented against it. With a rejection of the petition by the Magistrate, the petitioners appealed to the Sessions Judge, who being of the opinion that to thus equalize weight standards was illegal, reversed the

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Magistrate's order and insisted upon his own being carried into effect, which the Magistrate positively refused to do. The case was then referred to the Nizamut Adalut; but the *Adalut* did not give any clear decision as to whether the Magistrate's order was legal or not. The Sessions Judge then maintained that he would not alter his order since the Nizamat Adalat had not given an opinion nullifying his order. It was in consequence of the confusion arising from this jurisdictional stand off that a popular unrest occurred in the City.

On November 11, 1842, a mob of some 500 men assembled at the Magistrate's gate to present a petition. The Magistrate explained to them that he was fully ready to hear petitions if presented in a proper manner and that if one or two of their members would do so, it would receive attention on the next day as the office was then closed for a holiday. But the people refused to disperse and insisted that Doorga Bhatt, who had been apprehended the previous day for an alleged creation of disturbances, should be released first, and that the weights equalized in the previous year on November 2, 1841, should be restored and used for the weighing of grain. Both these requests were made in a manner which appeared objectionable to the Magistrate. As his arrangements for mobilising a large police force had been completed meanwhile, he compelled the mob to disperse.

The Magistrate later interrogated Doorga Bhatt and found that he had made the attempts to bring about the alteration regarding original weights standards more from a desire to procure the due he had formerly collected in his religious vocations than from any desire to oppose the authority. At this, the Magistrate released him on his personal recognizance under bond of Rs. 500 to keep the peace during one year.

The Magistrate had hoped that this would satisfy the people and that they would conduct themselves as quiet and peace-loving subjects. At 9 o'clock that night, however, word reached him that a large body of two hundred men had gathered round a tank in the middle of Civil Station and that they were in communication with sympathisers throughout the City. The Magistrate immediately collected a police force and proceeded in person to disperse this mob, arresting 62 of them. He then visited all the *thanas* of the City which he found quiet.

The next morning at about 8 o'clock, information was conveyed to the Magistrate that a mob was again collecting and much larger in number. This made him determined to call in the aid of the military and he

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requested the Major General Commanding of the local cantonment to send two companies of Sepoys. At the same time, he conveyed a message to the mob to disperse and threatened that if they did not give in, they would face the consequences.

With the troops ready, the Magistrate found a mob of around 2,000 assembled at the Sessions Judge's office. He rode in among them at the head of some orderly *sawars* and succeeded in dispersing the mob, availing himself of the opportunity to apprehend some of the leaders. One of the companies of soldiers was then posted at Ausan Ganj where the rioters lived and where the unrest had originated. The Magistrate proceeded with the other company to Kotwali where he proposed to stay on for a few days with the troops till the disturbances were quelled.

Next, upon re-entering the City, the Magistrate found nearly all the shops closed and the people in a state of great agitation. He took immediate steps to open the bazars and to induce the people to return to their usual employment. In the evening, a mob consisting of the same individuals who had assembled at the Sessions Judge's *Cutchery* in the morning, again began assembling in the Chowk. Shortly afterwards they threw mud and brickbats at the soldiers from the tops of houses and from the lanes leading into the square of the Chowk. The soldiers promptly descended into the square and dispersed the mob. The Magistrate held many in custody and they were detained at the Kotwali during the night, except for four boys who were immediately released due to their youth. After this, all remained quiet and many of the shops opened and continued to be so till evening.[17]

On the following day, November 13, all seemed quiet, but in the morning the Magistrate learned that Doorga Bhatt had been seen again at different places and was reported to have been inciting the people. At this, the Magistrate issued orders for his apprehension but Doorga evaded arrest. On November 14, all had returned to peace and the people opened their shops as usual, which made the Magistrate decide to withdraw the troops.

About this time, a deputation of some five or six respectable tradesmen and cloth-sellers waited for the Magistrate and again pleaded for repeal of the order enforcing a standard weight. According to the Magistrate himself, since this request had been made in a humble manner, he thought it no longer good policy on his part to press the enforcement of a reform which, although beneficial, was not viewed by the people to be so. Rather,

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the issue caused them to be incited by ill-disposed individuals with a sinister purpose. Further, being determined to remove all causes of further anarchy before leaving the City, he sent the necessary orders to the *Kotwal* and the *Thanadars* repealing the Magistrate's order of November 2, 1841, regarding the introduction of the standard weight.[18]

The Commissioner, however, did not approve some of the steps taken by the Magistrate in this episode, namely, that he called in the military without reference to the former, that he went to the Sessions Judge's court where the people had gathered, and that he dispersed the crowd there with the aid of the military. The Commissioner also observed that there had been a lack of understanding between the Sessions Judge and the Magistrate, that had a damaging effect upon the administration of Varanasi.[19]

The Gauriya Shahi

The prisoners in Varanasi jail prepared their meals separately according to the existing customs of society. As the prisoners were 'very pinched for want of fuel,' F. B. Gubbins, the Magistrate, had told the *Darogah* of the jail in July 1852, to point out to the prisoners how much further fuel supplies could be saved by messing together. The Darogah then persuaded some forty Muslims to mess together in order to show the rest how they would gain by doing so.[20]

Suddenly, an errant rumour spread throughout the City on August 1, 1842, to the effect that prisoners, particularly Hindus, were being forced to eat English bread. More accurately, a jail messing system had been, or was about to be, adopted by which prisoners could be subject to loss of caste; moreover, to create pressure in this regard, a regiment of foot and artillery soldiers was stationed at the jailhouse doors. But both the Magistrate and Major W. M. Steward, Agent to Governor-General, categorically denied these rumours as baseless.[21]

Consequently, on the evening of August 1, between five and seven hundred people were reported to have assembled around both the ghat and temple at Bhonsla Ghat. These disgruntled people were alleged to have been concocting mischief with regard to the rumours and were said to have refused to disperse when called upon to do so by the police.

On hearing this, the Magistrate hastened to the City where he found Ellis, an officer who had just returned from the scene of action, who informed him that everything was quiet and the people had dispersed. Still

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the Magistrate went to Bhonsla Ghat and enquired whether any of the assembly or its ringleaders were there. Upon his arrival three men were produced—two Nagars and one Gujarati Brahmin. The Magistrate enquired of them what they wanted and was told that they had assembled to devise a means by which to get the Magistrate out. The Magistrate told them that they were quite mistaken in their suppositions, lectured them on the folly of creating unlawful assemblages and told them that if they had any complaints, they should send him a deputation, not exceeding five members, and that he would carefully listen to all they had to say.

From subsequent enquiries, it was found that a deputation had been sent from the people assembled at Bhonsla Ghat to the leading *mahajans* of the City, Narayan Das, Hurr Das, Gurudas Mitra, Benilal Munsiff and Gopalchand. This deputation was said to have returned with a message to the effect that 'It was a matter of religion and that they would not be turned back'.

Before leaving Bhonsla Ghat, the Magistrate called upon the priest in charge of the temple there for an explanation as to why he had not shut his door and prevented the people from congregating there. As the priest could not provide an adequate answer, he and a few temple attendants were arrested leaving the temple in the care of a *Jemadar* and two policemen. They were released the next day and the priest was cautioned not to allow such a thing to happen again.

On August 2, the Magistrate heard that a good number of people intended to hold an assembly in the garden of Sundar Das but that the Thanadar of Kalbhyro had posted a party of police and prevented them from doing so. Towards afternoon, reports kept reaching the Magistrate of people assembling in the outskirts of the City. Finally, he received definite information of a large crowd having assembled at a place called Nati Imli in Thana Jyetpura. As he was about to start out to this location, Baboos Deonarayan Singh and Fatehnarain Singh called upon him. The Kotwal of the City and the Thanadar of Kalbhyro coming at the same time, it was agreed that the baboos, accompanied by these heads of the police, should go and speak to the mob and try to persuade them to disperse.

The Magistrate followed this party in about half an hour and met them on their way back 'appearing very much crest-fallen'. The mob was reported to have maligned them, doused them in mud and dirt and also verbally abused them for attempting mediation. The Magistrate then considered that it was his duty to meet the mob and see if they had

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anything to say to him. Near the site, he began conversing on friendly terms with the people gathered there. He learned that they were aggrieved because the police had used force and mistreated them the day before at Bhonsla Ghat. A few minutes later the Magistrate reached the Nati Imli where the mob had assembled in greatest number. He had hardly stopped his buggy and begun speaking to the people around him when a brickbat, or *gauriya* (clay hookka), according to popular version, struck him in the chest. This was followed by several more, none of which, however, hit him on the head. As the missiles flew thicker and thicker, he put up the hood of his buggy and fled seeking the assistance of the military. Having been informed that the mob was marching from the City on Burna Bridge, the Magistrate immediately obtained Col. Grave and Major Pond's permission and called out twenty sawars stationed in the local cantonment. Being aided by Lt. Brereton and others, the party charged the men in possession of the bridge and after some time succeeded in dispersing them.

The greater part of the mob made good their escape by taking advantage of the night that had already set in. The soldiers also got confused and did not know exactly whom they were following or whose orders they were to obey. The Magistrate, however, did succeed in capturing thirty-one troublemakers, most of whom were said to have been guilty of pelting stones at English ladies as they drove over Burna Bridge on their way to or from the Cantonment.

With two companies of the 33rd N.I. appearing soon after this, Gubbins left a guard on the bridge and another at the Secrole thana where the prisoners were lodged. He then proceeded with the rest of the force to clear the outskirts of the City where the mob had been located, but he found the place nearly empty. By making a detour with a couple of sawars and a thanahdar, the Magistrate succeeded in cutting off the retreat of some eighteen men who were still hanging about the Nati Imli, some of whom turned out to be important persons.

August 3rd passed without anything happening worthy of record, except that towards afternoon, a body of some two to three thousand men collected at Kamachha. The Magistrate spent August 4th carefully monitoring the movements of the people. Reade, the Superintendent of Police, put two companies of foot and a *ressalla* of irregular horse troops at the Magistrate's disposal. Towards 1 o'clock he learned that mobs were regrouping at the back of Kamachha and at a place called Byjnath and he

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immediately sent word to Capt. Seager of the 27th N.I. to hold his men in readiness to march down at about 4 p.m. Capt. Seager, along with Lts. Hyndman and Waterfield, marched from the cantonments at 4:30 p.m. with two companies accompanied by the Magistrate, Cust, Malcolm and some volunteers from among the officers of the station. The party also included a Lt. Needham with forty troopers.

They soon reached Kamachchha and found a mob of several thousand persons gathered there. The Magistrate, being the head of the party, repeatedly warned the mob that they were guilty of illegal assembly and ordered them to disperse.

'The mob', reported the Magistrate, 'remained doggedly obstinate and refused to disperse'. At that moment, part of the force that had made a detour under Cust and Malcom's guidance, appeared at the rear of the mob. The Magistrate then requested Captain Seager to disperse the mob and he himself set an example by dismounting and laying hold of the first person. Cust and Malcolm did the same and the example was followed by all the officers. Thus, they arrested 278 persons, whom they selected as 'the most ruffianly looking of the whole set'.

On August 5, the Magistrate, along with Cust and Wyutt, patrolled the City and persuaded a few unwilling traders to open their shops and tried to restore confidence in some others. A *subadar* with 40 men remained at the Kotwali, a *havildar* party was placed in the Trilochan Bazar, the most important grain market at that time, and another havildar party was put over the Kalbhyro thana and Vishweshwar Ganj while parties of horses patrolled the other bazars all day. Having taken so many steps, normalcy was finally restored in the City.[22]

The local administration was of the strong opinion that this disturbance, having its origin in a baseless rumour, was kept up by the fabricated reports of the wildest nature spread 'by the *budmushes* of the City for their own purpose' and also by the adverse reaction caused by the arrest of the ring leaders.[23] Though this opinion contained some element of truth, it was, however, not completely correct. The Magistrate's failure to fully appreciate local religious sentiment and to take the people into confidence regarding the institution of a general mess at the jail was at the root of this disturbance.

Though the Magistrate did not have sufficient reason to suspect the involvement of the Raja of Varanasi in this case, he contended that the Raja's conduct was somewhat mysterious on this occasion when he wrote :

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'I think it my duty here to state that I do not believe that the Raja was in any way guilty of exciting the inhabitants to rise in the foolish manner they did; at the same time, I consider that either he or his subordinates have behaved in a very foolish manner on this occasion. Firstly, one of the chief instigators of the riot, a Brahman of the name of Ramdutta Panda was busily employed in running backwards and forwards between Ramnagar (the Raja's main place of residence) and the rioters on Sunday and Monday last. Ramdutta Panda is said to be in the Raja of Benares's confidence. Secondly, absurd reports were circulated among the people calculated to prejudice them in favour of the Raja and against us. The Raja was among other things said to have offered to pay the cost of the jail prisoners "food for one year free and would consent not to force the messing system on them". The Raja's people took pains to impress it on the authority that the Raja had left Kamachha days before the riots began, with regard to which the Magistrate, however, observed that it was "an extraordinary fact that all his (the Raja's) personal attendants were seen by Mr. Wyalt, myself and several others at Kamachha on the Monday morning last" and that "it would in my (Magistrate's) humble opinion have looked much better had the Raja used his influence to prevent his fellow countrymen from committing themselves as they did instead of leaving immediately for Ramnagar". The facts, moreover, of the rioters on the Burna bridge having assembled at Kamachha to receive his orders show somewhat in what direction the wind blows.'[24]

Even if the Raja did sympathize with the rioters, his active involvement in this disturbance could not be proved. Again, the report of the Agent to the Governor-General on this issue did not corroborate the Magistrate's suspicions.[25]

The Thanahdar of Bhelupoora, in whose division the Kamachchha mob assembled and who had failed to report the circumstances to the Magistrate, was suspended from office.[26] The Magistrate also strongly suspected that Baboo Narayan Das, whom he held under arrest, was also chiefly involved in this affair.[27] But later, after about four years, the Commissioner found out that Gokulchand, a Thanahdar who was arrested later on charges of patronizing a gang of thieves, had been the main culprit of the riot of 1852.[28] The same man was also alleged to have collected money from people on threat of arrest during the riot, though, ironically, he was credited by Magistrate Gubbins with showing zeal in suppressing the riot at the time.[29]

A good number of people were arrested or suspected on these occasions and a list shows that people belonging to almost all classes and all quarters of the City took part in the agitation.[30] Ultimately, all were exonerated and set free in accordance with Magistrate Gubbin's following plea to Commissioner E. A. Reade on October 27, for the release of those arrested :

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'These persons have already suffered severely for their folly in loss of comfort, peace of mind and station and I think that the measures that I now take the liberty of recommending would in every way be advisable and would be accepted as a boon by the rest of their fellow townsmen.'[31]

According to hearsay, though not supported officially, the main reason for the agitation of 1852 was an official order to demolish the *phataks* and also to remove freely roving bulls from the streets and put them in confinement. To protest these moves, people engaged themselves in acts of civil disobedience. This movement became known as *Gauriya Shahi* in the local tradition, as *gauriyas* (clay hookkas) were readily collected from nearby shops and pelted at Magistrate Gubbins, Thanahdar Gokulchand and their forces in Nati Imli during this movement.[32]

The Wahabi Movement

The *Wahabi* movement, having begun in the second decade of the nineteenth century, first targeted Sikhs, but was finally directed against the British and holds a prominent place in the history of popular movements in Modern India. It was started by Saiyid Ahmad, a Muslim of Raiberilli, and was at first restricted to Muslim participants, but soon spread over a vast area of northern and eastern India and gathered a large number of followers, thanks to the movement's unique leadership and remarkable power of organization.[33]

Saiyid Ahmad is reported to have visited Varanasi in 1821, where he stayed for about two or three weeks. During this time he attempted to incite local Muslims against the British and campaigned for the establishment of a *Dar-ul-Islam*,[34] but local Muslims remained passive and did not respond to his call.[35] The Wahabis then established a centre in the City[36] but did not succeed in exerting any powerful influence here.

VARANASI : A PIONEER IN CIVIL MOVEMENTS

On the basis of available fragmented and one-sided official reports of civil movements, it is difficult to make any definite observations or to pass any clear judgements related to them from an objective point of view. Nevertheless, we offer the following general observations.

Mass movements occur when there is a common grievance against authority and these can be either violent or non-violent in nature. In Varanasi, however, aggrieved citizens generally adopted various means of non-violent protest. We have already noted that the mass closure of bazars during such incidents was not a novel occurrence in the City and this was

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confirmed by Duncan, the Resident, in his report regarding the Sanitation Agitation of 1790. Duncan wrote, that mass closure of shops as a form of protest had been long practised here and was known by name 'hurtal'. But the hurtal of 1790 is historically important because this was probably the first incident of its sort in the City, if not in the whole of India, occurring during the British occupation. Moreover, we have already recorded in Chapter XIX that the custom of 'dhurna', involving various modes of coercion practised to resolve grievances against private individuals that had been banned by the British Government, was later adopted by the citizens of the City as a means of protest against the Government itself.

A closer study of these movements reveals that people living in the Jyetpura and Ausan Ganj quarters of the City almost always initiated them. It was because these areas were inhabited by a considerable number of more militant and spirited people than their counterparts. Comparatively speaking, these areas had also remained free of close administrative supervision.

The independent spirit of the residents of Varanasi was clearly manifest in these movements and in cases of common cause, unity prevailed among all the citizens, irrespective of religion, caste or creed. This spirit was best exemplified during the House Tax Movement of 1810. Coupled with other factors, the impulsiveness of some Brahmins, Rajputs and Jaths among the Hindus, and Zollahs among the Muslims, played an important role in these movements. What had remained wanting during most of these movements was the leadership capable of successfully guiding the agitators through strategic objectives. Again, this shortcoming was also evident during the House Tax Movement, which having erupted with such fellowship and vigour, finally ended in confusion and disarray. Nevertheless, the credit must go to the protestors for they rarely allowed movements to turn violent, or to be taken over by the miscreants of the City. What is more creditable, protestors often succeeded in reshaping administrative edicts in their favour, a result that was unique to Varanasi, compared to the protests of other Indian cities under the British, at least during the first half of nineteenth century.

The British Government and its officials were also partly responsible for the recurrence of public protests. The people were not accustomed to the introduction of so many rules and regulations affecting almost every walk of life. These laws, frequently imposed upon the subjects without benefit of explanation or orientation for the need of such administrative

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reforms, often seemed novel and offensive to them. History shows that despite the best intentions of the reformers, reforms sometimes fail to deliver the desired effect for want of preparedness of those for whom the reforms are meant. This lesson of history was ignored by some enthusiastic and well-intentioned officials, and in consequence, some of the needed reforms failed. These officials, being unwilling or unable to see their own errors in execution of proposed improvements, criticized the people in strong terms for their objections. Magistrate Davidson, for instance, while commenting on his failure to institute standard weight reforms, criticizes the people writing, 'which although in itself beneficial, was not viewed so by the people, nor within the capacity of the vulgar mind to understand, but which exposed them to be excited by ill-disposed and designing people with a sinister purpose.'[37] In fact, local British administrators, with few notable exceptions like Duncan and Prinsep, rarely succeeded in understanding the psyche or winning the confidence of the people.

Occasional dissension between the judiciary and the executive branches also produced harmful effects on the administration of the City, causing chaos and confusion among the people. Such dissension is evident in such instances as when the Sessions Judge and the Magistrate were at odds over the issue of weight reforms in 1842. The severity of the possible consequences resulting from such administrative dissension was pointed out by the Commissioner himself on that occasion.

Moreover, the recurrence of first issuing an order and then repealing or revising it showed weakness in the Administration. In Varanasi this happened on a number of occasions, including the House Tax and Weight Reforms Movements. So far as the House Tax Movement was concerned, it would, however, be fair to note that though the local authority advised otherwise, the supreme authority in Calcutta insisted on introducing the House Tax in the City, finally having to revise the order to grant certain concessions in its enforcement. Nevertheless, as we have already pointed out, the local administration also deserves credit for dealing with most of these crises successfully.

Economic, social and religious issues were the primary catalysts of these movements. Among these, those perceived by the citizens as religious issues were always the most sensitive and the least understood and calculated by the British. For example, with just a rumour that prisoners were likely to be converted to Christianity, people belonging to

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all stations of life and to all quarters of the City united in their anger towards the authorities and took to the streets in protest.

Newspapers, journals and magazines usually play an important role in the growth of civil awareness and in the formation of public opinion on issues of public interest. Unfortunately, we know almost nothing in this respect regarding the Varanasi-based journals that flourished here through 1857, except for the *Kashivartaprakashika*, which has already been detailed in Chapter XIV.

Finally, local protest over socio-economic and religious issues made Varanasi a pioneer in the field of civil movements in Modern India. These protests also paved the way for ever wider and more vigorous movements against the British that culminated in the final struggle for the nation's freedom.[38]

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CHAPTER XXI

VARANASI IN THE EYES OF TRAVELLERS

SCARCITY OF EARLY VARANASI ACCOUNTS

Live accounts of Varanasi are extremely rare given its long, eventful and glorious history. Available accounts are, again, intermittent and mostly fragmented and one-sided, as they present only a religious picture with descriptions and locations of holy sites, glories attributed to deities, and the merits to be gained by worshipping or installing deities, etc. Consequently, even with the descriptions left by Indians and foreigners which furnish stray bits of information on various aspects of the City other than the religious, data on socio-economic conditions, educational systems, cultural life and the political situation of ancient and medieval Varanasi are inadequate at best.

With the opening of the Modern Age the situation changed, however, when the number of foreign visitors increased and the idea of writing travel accounts dawned on many Indians. Thus, firsthand accounts of Varanasi in the Modern Age are more numerous than those found for the Ancient or Medieval Ages.

THE ATTRACTION OF VARANASI FOR WESTERNERS

The British Indian Empire was the largest and richest of all Britain's colonial conquests and became 'the jewel of the British Crown'. An exotic land with an ancient religious and cultural heritage and mystical ethos, India attracted all classes of people including foreign traders, artists, ecclesiastics, fortune-seekers, scholars, aristocrats, as well as the gentry from all parts of Europe, especially from England. The journey, however, was arduous, hazardous and expensive, and entry to India was jealously guarded by the Government. Nevertheless, nothing could prevent a number of Europeans from venturing to the Indian subcontinent, and many of them produced a good amount of travel literature on India. These adventurers wished to get firsthand knowledge of a country hitherto largely unknown to them and make it known to their fellow countrymen.

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Among these travellers there were a considerable number of professional and amateur painters and ecclesiastics. The latter travelled extensively across the country and worked with their usual zeal for converting the 'native heathens'—as they referred to Indians, to Christianity. They wrote accounts of Indian manners and customs, mainly of the Hindus, tainted by their own views and interpretations. These, especially the more popular missionary accounts even according to some Western authors like E. B. Havell,[1] were biased against Hinduism and prompted by the hope of kindling sympathy among Europeans in order to collect funds for their missionary work, the cause of bringing the local people 'from darkness to light'.

Among all the places of India, Varanasi, the traditional centre of Hindu religion and culture, held a special attraction. It had become well known throughout Europe, especially to Britain, as early as in the last part of the eighteenth century, that is, almost since the beginning of the British occupation of Varanasi, for reasons already stated in the introductory chapter. Hence, Varanasi was a destination of choice for many travellers and, as a matter of course, one had to pass through the City, either by road or by river, on one's way to the north of India.

The Western travellers, both male and female, represented a variety of nationalities—British, French, German, Greek, Polish, Portuguese, Swiss, American, etc., and, besides military personnel, consisted of artists, missionaries, scholars, globetrotters, etc. While there were many who came for the sole purpose of sight-seeing, there were others who passed through or settled here temporarily in connection with some business and viewed the City with profound interest. Generally, these visitors followed the river by boat to Varanasi, but in special cases they arrived overland by unpredictable roadways. Here is a description of one such journey, made in 1807, by roadways :

'It may not be uninteresting to such of my readers as have not been in this country (India) to give a slight sketch in this place of the retinue of servants, baggage-elephants, camels, horses, which, with a hundred et-ceteras, are indispensable on a journey by land. The best mode in which I can convey some idea of this is, by an enumeration of our party and its train, which, although it may appear large to some of my readers, contained not one individual more than comfort required. None accompanied us for mere state. Our party consisted of seven persons. We had three *howdah*-elephants, that is, animals trained for riding, hunting,

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and shooting, well broke, and with able *mahauts*, or leaders. Four others carried the camp-equipage, which consisted of two large marquees, each a sufficient load for an elephant, being about eighteen or twenty hundred weight. There were two smaller tents, besides others for the servants and guard of Sepoys; a light gig and horse, several saddle-horses, four palanquins, a cart, and hackery, or common cart of the country, with two bullocks to each. About two hundred servants and followers, and a guard of Sepoys, or native infantry, of forty men and a native officer, attended us.

The road called the old road was the route we proposed to take, although somewhat longer than the new; but as it was desirable to visit several cantonments of troops on the way, and as the supplies were more abundant upon this line, the former was preferred.'*

In the early days of the British Empire visitors were required to get permission from the authorities for such travels. In most cases their stays in Varanasi were of short duration, extending from one to three weeks and sometimes even shorter. These visitors would usually be put up with some local European acquaintance or at the Government rest-house, if necessary, they would lodge aboard the boat itself. In some cases, travellers wrote accounts of their experiences in Varanasi, either in diaries or in letters addressed to relatives at other stations in India or in Europe or America, and these were published as books later on.

THE ATTRACTION OF VARANASI FOR INDIANS

Over the ages the number of Indian visitors to the City, this chief centre of Hindu pilgrimage, cannot even be compared to the handful of Europeans that ventured here. Despite this, the number of chronicles of the City left by Indians are remarkably few.

The difference in outlook between most European and Indian travellers is significant as well. While the former focused their attention on that which they found exotic, fascinating, amusing, or even queer, most Indians, on the contrary, looked upon the City with utmost love and respect. For Indian visitors, pilgrimage was the primary purpose to journey here and sight-seeing was but a secondary consideration, while for Europeans, sight-seeing was the primary and, in most cases, the sole purpose for visiting Varanasi.

In the nineteenth century, however, a new class of Indians emerged

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* Lieutenant Colonel Charles Ramus Forrest, *A picturesque Tour along the Rivers Ganges and Jumna in India*, p. 125.

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who, under the spell of Western education, became more agnostic in their views and such persons,* though comparatively few in number, visited the City more for tourism than pilgrimage.

WESTERN TRAVELLERS

Now we shall present a brief chronological report on some of the Western travellers in and around our period of review that left accounts on Varanasi in one form or another. Though the following two German travellers did not visit Varanasi during this period, they did arrive just before it and left notes and references on the City.

Joseph Tieffenthaler, an apostolic missionary who had been in India since 1743, is credited with making the first geographical survey of the course of the Ganga. His account of India, translated into German from the original Latin manuscript, was published in 1785. The English translation is entitled *Historic-Geographic Description of Hindustan*. His account, which includes a description of Varanasi, is sketchy and bears the usual outlook of a Christian missionary.

Carsten Niebuhr, who visited Western India in 1764, also paid a visit to the Upper Provinces, including Varanasi, a report of which he prepared in 1774.

William Hodges R. A. (1744-1797), a professional British landscape painter, he was given special permission to accompany Warren Hastings on his boat expedition to Varanasi to settle matters with Raja Chet Singh. They arrived on August 15, 1781, when Hodges recorded his first impressions upon seeing the City saying, 'I felt a real pleasure on my arrival at this place (Varanasi) from being able to contemplate the pure Hindu manners, arts, buildings and customs, undepraved by any intermixture with Mahomedans; and laid my plans for observing with the utmost attention whatever came within the sphere of a painter's notice.'[2]

But soon the party had to face serious disturbances caused by Hastings's manhandling of Raja Chet Singh. Consequently, Hastings had to escape to Chunar with Hodges in tow. Finally, Hastings came back to the City with reinforcement garrisons and wrested Varanasi from Chet Singh. Hodges returned to Varanasi on 28 September and stayed here (with some intervals) until the end of December. Though the artist's residence in

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* Bholanauth Chunder, the author of *The Travels of a Hindoo*, is an example of the 'new class' referred to.

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the City was brief, he carried on with his paintings and produced some rare pieces of art. His travel account was published in London in 1793 under the title, *Travels in India during the Years 1780, 1781, 1782 & 1783.**

George Foster was a civil servant with the Government. With a view to investigating the mythology of the Hindus, he obtained permission from the authorities to visit Varanasi. He came by the river route and stayed here from 26 August to 12 December, 1782. His account of the City, in the form of letters, forms parts of his work entitled, *A Journey from Bengal to England through the Northern part of India, Kashmire, Afganisthan and Persia into Russia, by the Caspian Sea*, in two volumes, published in London in 1798.

James Forbes was also a Britisher who lived in India for about seventeen years. He came to the City by boat and stayed from the 26 to 31 of August, 1785. His account of the City is included in his work entitled, *Oriental Memories selected and abridged from a series of familiar letters... and including observations on parts of Africa and South America and a narrative of occurrences in Four India Voyages*. This work, illustrated by engravings from his original drawings, was published in four volumes in London in 1813.**

Lord Teignmouth visited the City in 1788.

Thomas Daniell (1749-1840) and his nephew **William Daniell** (1769-1837) were professional landscape painters in Britain[3] and they stayed in India between 1786 and 1793 for the sole purpose of painting. In 1788, they stayed in the City on November 4 and 5 on their way north, then, after a visit to Jaunpur for about two weeks, from December 14 to 28.[4] *The Oriental Annual or Scenes in India*, published in London in 1834 with a descriptive account by Rev. Hobart Caunter, contained 25 engravings from original drawings by Willian Daniell.***

Leckie D. R. visited the City in 1790 and left his account of Varanasi in a book entitled *Journal of a route to Nagpore by the way of Cuttac, etc., in the year 1790 and with an account of Nagpore and a journey from that place to Benares by the Soohagee Pass*. This book was published in 1800 in London.

Rev. William Tennant, one of 'His Majesty's Chaplains in India', visited the City in 1798, but the actual period of his stay in Varanasi is not

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* For further information on his paintings, see Chapter XV.

** *Ibid.*

*** For further details, see Chapter XV.

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known. He was chiefly interested in socio-religious issues of the day, which mainly formed the theme of his book, *Indian Recreations*. It consists chiefly of 'strictures on the Domestic and Rural Economy of the Mahommedans and Hindoos' and was published in two volumes in 1803 in Edinburgh.

L. Contestebili, a French miniature painter, visited the City in 1798 and stayed on here more than a month, presumably in connection with his profession.[5]

Lord George Viscount Valentia, a member of the British nobility, he visited the City in 1803, arriving here at the beginning of March and staying for about two weeks. He did not need any permission from the authority, rather the information of his visit had been conveyed to the British officers at different stations in advance so as to receive him cordially. He came by road via the *dawk*, or post. Valentia's stay in the City was eventful as he met a number of local dignitaries and also held a *durbar* attended by different classes of society. He gives the following description of that durbar in his travelogue :

> 'After breakfasting early with Mr. Neave, I the next day held a *durbar* or levee for the natives of rank sufficient to be entitled to sit down in my presence. Several shroffs first appeared, to show me the specimens of their finest manufactures in silks, gold cloth, and embroidered gauzes. The pieces were of the richest patterns, and very high priced. I understand that more are manufactured here than at any other place in India, and that they are not only used in the East for dresses of ceremony, but are exported in considerable quantities to Europe. I conceived that the trade of gold and silver stuffs not a little assists in keeping up the prosperity of Benares, though on religious considerations, it ought only to be attributed to the holiness of the place. I procured from a banker one of the zodiac mohurs, which are now so extremely rare, that it is almost impossible to procure a complete set.'

Next, Valentia received two princes, sons of Jawan Bakt. Afterwards he also received the *vakeels* of the Maratha states, the great uncle and brother of the Raja of Varanasi, together with 'many other natives of rank'. Among them there was a 'very fine and fair boy', the son of Gulam Muhammad, the celebrated Rohilla Chief, who resided in the City with his mother.

Despite a few mistakes,[6] Valentia's account of Varanasi is thorough, and has been considerably utilized by historians of Varanasi. It is included in his work entitled *Voyages and Travels to India, Ceylon, the Red Sea, Abyssinia, and Egypt, in the years 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806*, and was published in four volumes in 1811 in London.

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Lieutenant Colonel Forrest, who was a staff of the Government in Bengal, left Calcutta on December 2, 1807, travelled by road and most possibly reached the City sometime in January of the next year. He stayed five days here and left his account in *A Picturesque Tour along the Rivers Ganges and Jumna in India.*

The author of *The Hindoos* :[7] *The Hindoos* was an early nineteenth century popular handbook of India. This handbook, which includes descriptions of Varanasi and was written on the basis of the author's personal experience of the City, was published in England. The author, however, remained anonymous.

Mrs Alexander Deane visited the City in 1810 for a short period and left on 10 May. Her account of the City forms part of her travelogue entitled *A Tour through the Upper Provinces of Hindustan comprising a period between the years 1804 and 1814*, and contains interesting remarks and authentic anecdotes. This book was published in 1823 in London.

Lady Nugent Maria visited the City in 1812 and left an account in her book, *A Journal from the year 1811 till the year 1815 including a Voyage to and Residence in India.* It was published in 1839 in London.[8]

Col. Colin Mackenzie was in Government military service and was also a great scholar. He once took leave in 1813 when he travelled to North India and presumably visited the City. He came again in 1847 with his wife who recorded the events of this visit to the City.*

Captain Nikolaos Kephalas[9] was a Greek born around 1765 on the island of Zakynthos and was a man of many devices. He led an eventful life, but one which was not always glorious. He had set out on a voyage when he visited India twice and left an account published in 1826 in Greek, which in English reads, 'Description of the City of Benares in India, of Indian Polytheism, its cult and the customs of those people'. Kephalas also translated the same book into Italian which was published in 1826 in Livorno.

Kephalas visited Varanasi towards the end of 1823 and met Galanos, a fellow Greek and distinguished orientalist who had been living in the City engaged in scholastic pursuits. Galanos received Kephalas cordially and Kephalas also mentioned Galanos with a note of high respect and appreciation in his writings, describing him as 'a man outstanding in sciences and literature and Oriental languages' and 'most erudite in the Sanskrit dialect and in the secrets of the Indians' and 'honoured widely by

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* Also see the entry under Mrs Mackenzie.

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Brahmins and travellers for his wisdom no less than for his righteousness'. It is strange that in spite of Kephalas's high esteem for Galanos, Kephalas did not live up to the trust Galanos* had placed in him. He claimed some of Galanos's academic pursuits in Varanasi as his own upon his return to Europe.

Right Rev. Reginald Heber, the Lord Bishop of Calcutta (1823-1826), much to his credit was a scholar, a prolific writer, and also an amateur artist. He came to the City by *dawk* in the beginning of September 1824 and stayed for about a week, then leaving for Allahabad. Though the main purpose of his visit was to 'see that inferior padres did their duty', he meticulously observed other things during his visit and left a detailed account of his journey to Varanasi. Warmly received by local European society, arrangements were made for his visit to a number of important places of the City and for meetings with some distinguished citizens. His graphic account of Varanasi, along with his observations, forms part of his travelogue, *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India, from Calcutta to Bombay 1824-25* (*with notes on Ceylon*). It includes an account of a journey to Madras and the Southern provinces, 1826, and a letter written in India. It was published from London in three volumes. His work, which is at once marked by his objective and penetrating treatment, is considered highly valuable both as travel literature and as history and has been used exhaustively by historians of Varanasi and India. Heber passed away prematurely, when he was only forty three, during his travel to South India.

Rev. Hobart Caunter visited the City around 1826 coming by boat. His account forms the descriptive portion of the *Oriental Annual* by William Daniell.

Fanny Parkes, an amateur British artist, travelled in the East for twenty-four years in search of picturesque scenes, and visited the City around 1830. Her account of Varanasi is included in her work *Wandering of a Pilgrim in Search of the Picturesque during twenty four years in the East*. This book was published in 1850 in London.[10]

Victor Jacquemont, French by birth, was a Naturalist from the Museum of Natural History of Paris and travelled in the East between 1828-31 by order of the French Government. He was cordially received by local Europeans when he arrived at Varanasi on December 31, 1829, and stayed for a short period but did not throw any light on what he witnessed

* For further details on Kephalas and Demetrius Galanos, see Chapter XII.

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here, except a reference to his stay in his work entitled *Letters from India describing a Journey in the British Dominions of India, Tibet, Lahore and Cashmere during the years 1828, 1829,1831*. This work, which includes a map of India and a portrait of the author, was published, perhaps after translation into English, in two volumes in London in 1834.

Major Archer, visited the City in February, 1829 and stayed for a short time. His account of the City is included in his book, *Tour in Upper India and in Parts of the Himalaya Mountains*, published in 1833.

Thomas Bacon, an amateur British painter, visited the City around 1830 and left an account of it in *The Oriental Annual* published in 1839 in London. He was also the author of *First Impressions and Studies from Nature in Hindustan*.

What marks Bacon's work is that it belongs to that notorious class of accounts on India motivated by the presentation of distorted facts, originating from an attitude of scorn and hatred for everything that was Indian, and also a frenzy to establish that Europeans were superior to Indians in all respects.[11]

Emma Roberts, along with others, visited the City around 1830. Her detailed account of Varanasi forms part of the book, *Hindostan—Its Landscapes, Palaces, Temples, Tombs; the Shores of the Red Sea; and the Sublime and Romantic Scenery of the Himalaya Mountains*. This book was illustrated with scenes drawn by Turner, Stanfield, Prout, Cattermole, Roberts, Allom, etc., from original sketches by Commander Robert Elliot R. N., & Lieut. Geo. Francis White. The book was published in 1837 in London.

Notwithstanding her furnishing valuable and interesting information on the City, she could not rise above the common run of British attitudes towards the Indian people and their culture.

Count Wladyslaw Malachowski was an officer of the Bank of Poland dealing in mining and industry. Under the direction of that bank, Malachowski, accompanied by one Velthusen, arrived by ship in Calcutta. They brought forty metric tons of zinc with them as there had been no demand for it in Europe. He prepared a detailed account of his travel through Eastern India from May 1830 till the summer of 1831, a large portion of which deals with Varanasi. This account, which is unique in many respects, will be dealt with in greater detail later. His work, *Travel in Eastern India*, was published in the 'Biblioteka Warszawska' in August 1841 in Vol. III.

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Rev. William Buyers, a missionary of the London Missionary Society, was posted in Varanasi in 1832 and was the precursor of Rev. Sherring. He can be called the first Western chronicler of Varanasi in the sense that he utilized his stay to write a fairly long account of the City (about one hundred and fifty pages). His book, *Recollections of Northern India*, published in 1848, contains details on the condition of women, fairs and festivals, missionary activities, etc.

Captain Robert Smith, a Bengal Engineer under the East India Company, was an amateur artist. On the eve of his retirement in 1833, he visited Varanasi and after his last journey down the Ganga he painted some pictures.[12] These paintings form part of a book entitled *Description of a View of the Holy City of Benares and the Sacred Ganges*, which was published in 1840 in London.*

Henry Edward Fane, the Aide-de-Camp to the Commander-in-Chief of India, visited the City in October 1836, when his boss visited there to inspect the army at the Benares cantonment. He left a brief account of the City in his book, *Five Years in India*, which was published in two volumes in London in 1842.

Mrs Harriette Ashmore, the wife of a British military officer and herself an amateur painter, was here briefly with her husband from January 31 to February 10, 1834. She wrote a fairly good account of the City, especially its markets, which forms part of her work, *Narrative of a three Months March in India, and a Residence in the Dooab*. This book also contains drawings 'made on the spot'. The author wrote her account under the pen name 'the Wife of an Officer in the 16th Foot', which was published in 1841 in London.

Emily Eden, a British author, wrote, among other books, *The Detached House* and *The Semi-attached Couple*. She and Lord William Godolphin Osborne reached the City on November 15, 1837, and passed a few days here, marked by the holding of a *durbar* by Godolphin on November 18. This durbar was attended by seventy of the local nobility among whom was the Raja of Varanasi who arrived with magnificent *sawars* of elephants and camels. Miss Eden met the widow *begum* of Mughal Prince Jawan Bakt. Local European society cordially received them and arranged a ball dance in their honour.

Her account of the City, written in the form of letters to her sister, is included in her book, *Up the Country*. This was published in two volumes

* For information on his paintings, see Chapter XV.

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in London (2nd Edition in 1866) and dedicated to Lord Godolphin 'who, except the authoress, was almost the only survivor', at the time of dedication, 'of a large party that left the Government House for a tour in the Upper Provinces.'

Rev. James Kennedy of the London Missionary Society was posted in Varanasi in 1839 as a colleague of Rev. William Buyers. Except for the ten years between 1847-1857, Kennedy spent four decades in India, most of which was spent in the North Western Provinces, and chiefly in Varanasi. He gave a detailed description of the missionary activities of those places in his account entitled *Life and Work in Benares and Kumaon*, published in London in 1884.

C. J. C. Davidson, Lt. Colonel of Bengal Engineers under the Government of the East India Company, was one among the few in service of the Government who criticized Warren Hastings' Varanasi Policy. He reached the City on December 12, 1839, stayed for a short period and left a brief account of Varanasi, which is included in his book, *Diary of Travels and Adventures in Upper India, etc.*, published in two volumes in London in 1843.

Doctor W. Hoffmeister, a German doctor, had been the travelling physician to the Prince of Waldemare of Prussia, who came to visit India. They incidentally joined the English in the Battle of Ferozshah against the Sikhs and the prince was killed. Afterwards, Hoffmeister came to Varanasi by *dawk* from Delhi via Gorakhpur and Ajamgarh. He reached the City around the second week of March 1845 and left on the nineteenth of the same month. The title of English translation of his book, originally written in German, is *Travels in Ceylon and Continental India including Nepal and other parts of the Himalayas to the borders of the Tibet with some notices of the overland route*, published in MDCE SLVIII (1848), in Edinburgh. His account of Varanasi is brief, but distinct for an outlook characteristically different from most British travellers. This is clearly evident when he criticizes English settlers for their view that Calcutta was far superior to Varanasi, himself holding quite the opposite view. He rather passionately describes Varanasi with :

> 'Benares is in my opinion the most beautiful of all the Indian cities we have hitherto seen. It extends along the banks of the noble river, forming a wide crescent of majestic buildings, countless mosques, minarets, pagodas and palaces. All these splendid edifices are of a remarkably beautiful red sandstone, found in quarries near the city. The motley inhabitants, whose real numbers have scarcely been ascertained,

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move and jostle on the live-long day, in the crowded streets and on the banks of the Ganges, which are almost everywhere provided with broad flights of steps, or *Ghauts*, to enable the pilgrims to descend with care and comfort to the margin of the sacred stream. No other city that I have seen presents as lively a picture of the mode of living of the people of India, their manners and their customs, as Benares. How poor and monotonous in comparison is that great metropolis, Calcutta, so often extolled by the English—wedded to all their home luxuries, because forsooth roast beef and pickles and everything that appertains to good living and to "comfort" may there be had in abundance to their very heart's content !'

Mrs Mackenzie : We have already stated that Mr Colin Mackenzie, a Military officer and scholar, visited the City with his wife in 1847 and stayed here from 13 to 18 January.[13] Mrs Mackenzie's main interests were the state of Christianity in India, the educational enterprises of the Christian missionaries, as well as the condition of women, all of which form the special subject matter of her account of the City. She was also an amateur artist.* This family met a number of local nobles among whom were the recently deposed Raja of Satara and the Raja of Vizianagaram. She wrote the following reminiscences of the young Vizianagaram Chief saying, '...when the young Rajah was here the other day, C. (her husband, Colin) showed him my sketch of the Nepal Sardars and asked him if he would like to sit for his portrait, he confessed that his prejudices would not allow him to do so.'[14]

Her book, *Six Years in India, Dehli—City of the Great Mughals, with an account of the various tribes in Hindostan, Hindoos, Sikhs, Seikhs, Afgans, etc.*, published in London in 1857, was originally published with the title, *The Mission, the Camp and the Zenana.*

Captain Francis Egerton R. N., a British Military officer in India, reached the City on February 10, 1851 and put up in a hotel where he stayed for a short period. He left an elaborate account of the local jail and lunatic asylum. His account of the City was included in his book, *Journal of a Winter's Tour in India with a Visit to the Court of Nepal*, published in 1852 in two volumes in London.

John B. Ireland : John Ireland is the only American traveller whom we know to have visited Varanasi and to have left an account of his stay during the period under review. He was, thus, the precursor of a host of Americans who travelled to, and in some instances, also wrote about the City in later years, including Mark Twain. It appears from Sherring's book

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* For information on her paintings, see Chapter XV.

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on Varanasi that Rev. Dr Thompson, a Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, travelled to India in the 1860s 'on a tour of visitation to the missions of that body, situated chiefly in Rohilkhand and Oudh'.[15] But whether or not he actually paid a visit to Varanasi during this travel is not known.

Ireland's account, entitled *Wall Street to Cashmere : a Journal of Five Years in Asia, Africa, and Europe*, published in New York in 1859, was based on 'a continuous journal in letters' written to his mother during his travel.

In his preface the traveller informs us that during his stay in India, he was 'repeatedly solicited by (his) civilian friends in India, to publish a book, as they wish to see an American view of their Country and Government'. His friends in America also requested him to write a book that would enable them to know what he saw in India. Initially he did not accede to these requests, but, finally, he changed his mind. He writes in this connection : 'And it is only now, when India and its affairs have assumed such a vast importance before the world (possibly referring to the Indian Revolt of 1857 and its sequel) that I have been induced to yield to the repeated solicitation of friends, to give the public my mite of experience and knowledge of the country, its people, customs, government, army, etc., derived during eighteen months of pleasure travel in which I visited every part of India'. The book also contains nearly one hundred illustrations from sketches made by him on the spot—this being of special interest to Americans as an uncommon work undertaken by an American traveller during this period.

We shall quote extensively from Ireland's account of the City below—as Ireland himself proposed—to present readers with an American perspective or, rather, an American view of Varanasi, which reveals both similarities and dissimilarities of those held by Europeans, especially the British.[16]

> 'Nov. 3rd (1853)—I reached the river [Ganga] at nine. The entire distance to this place, the road had been admirable, made of what they call "kunka". It is graded and this yellow, clayish-looking material is put on, then wet and pounded, and as it becomes hard, is as smooth as a floor. I saw almost hourly, people going to market with provisions on horses or oxen. Tall, savage-looking fellows, armed with sword and spear, perhaps the turbulent owners of some small patch of land, and almost bursting with the excess of dignified importance as he swaggered along or caracoled his horse. The dak horses are an odd set of ugly brutes—every one balks: the only difference is in the number of times, or length of time it takes to get him off again. I

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will send you a sketch of "a balk" with the native manner of starting him off, all shouting "chullo, chullo" [Get along !] at the top of their lungs.

The city being on the east bank, had a very fine view, and without exception is the most imposing city I've seen in India. Though the chosen seat of Hindooism, the lofty minarets of Aurungzebe's famous mosque, tower conspicuously above every other object. The city forms an unbroken front of fine buildings and ghauts for a full four miles on the river's banks, the two being inseparable, the ghauts being the fine flight of steps and terrace for religious bathing, and the buildings, species of massive portals, the whole erected by devotees, or sinners, as a propitiatory offering, as the Catholics have masses said for their souls.

For so large a town there appear to be very few boats. From the great sanctity of the city, and the importance they attach to bathing in the Ganges here, and the several pilgrimages within a circuit of a few miles, there are great numbers of people coming and going all the time. The estimate is, that at least 20,000 arrive daily, and as many more who depart. Most of them make pilgrimages by land, but in all kinds of ways according to what they deem the most penitential....

He* called upon and introduced me to Colonel Lane, one of the most distinguished officers in India. Here I saw Major Ousely, a son of Sir Gore Ousely, who was distinguished for services in Persia some years since; he is equally distinguished in the sporting way, having been at the death of 800 tigers. We then continued on to the Deputy-Collector's, a friend of H—'s, a "country born" or "half caste" who goes in the best society here. Usually in calling upon Europeans, they are *obliged* to *leave* their carriages at the gates. We dined here. He seemed a very nice person. Among other amusing things he gave us an account of his first visit to Calcutta a few weeks since....

Nov. 4th—To-day the Governor arrived, and all the officials are out to "lick the dust" or "eat dirt," as the native term official cringing. Hall and I started at daylight for the upper end of the city, where we took a boat, and floated down past the superb ghauts, a most picturesque sight, thousands of people in all colors, costumes, and attitudes, bathing, praying, "doing poojah," meditating (an important feature in their religion) and sipping Ganges water to the four corners of the earth (north, east, south, and west), and the sun. Others were being shaved, every hair counting a million years of bliss in another sphere.

We then stopped at the ghaut by the "Man Mandul" Observatory....

We then dropped down the stream, stopping to see the mosque built by Aurungzebe from the ruins of Hindoo temples he had destroyed for the purpose. The view I had from the lofty minarets was most extensive. The city appears to be principally built on the banks of the river. Continued on, passing the ghaut built by the Emperor of Delhi, as well as his house. We stopped at another ghaut, and visited the "Bappee Dome" [Jnan Vapi] and well, where (on dit) the presiding deity of Benares jumped down when the city was besieged by the Mahommedans. This is a very sacred place. Here they sip Ganges water, and throw down flowers until the water is fairly putrid. Then the "Vishwishna," [Vishwanatha] or "Lord of all," a

* Fitzedward Hall, an American professor of the Benares Sanskrit College, in whose bungalow Ireland was put up.

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temple with golden spire or tower, now the Lena Porna [Annapurna], the ancient Ceres. Here the devotees prostrated themselves and touched all sides of their face, nose, and forehead. After which a high priest took us in his house; the fellow seemed to have made money in his profession, judging from the furniture.

We then walked to the square where the Rajah of Benares's (he and Hall are great friends) elephants met us, (H— having written to the Rajah for it), most of the streets being too narrow for the buggy. This was my first elephant experience; it seemed as if we should roll off every moment from the long rolling gait of the animal. Besides which projecting eaves were sadly in the way of our craniums; however we reached home safely by good luck. After breakfast, where we had a most delicious fruit I've failed to speak of before, the custard apple, about the size of a large pear. The fruit is covered with a thick skin for a fruit of that kind. The meat is soft and most luscious. There are two quite different kinds, one grows on the west side of India, the other here. After breakfast I went to the river and in floating down, I made some sketches of the city and ghauts.

This evening dined with some very nice people, a Mr. R—and wife—he has travelled and seen much of the world; losing his fortune he took orders. Then home and took a palanquin for Chunar....

The Cholera made terrible havoc in this [Chunar], as in most other parts of the country last summer. In Benares the native people burnt their dead, and they are said to have amounted to at least 1,200 a day ! In 14 days they lost 11 per cent of the European population !

Nov. 6th—I started last night at nine and reached this [Benares] at two, when I was very soon showed in my bed at H—'s. This morning I rode out to see the "Loci-Kedudon," [Kashi—Karbat (?)] or jumping place, so called from some nonsensical tradition. There are two remains of Bhuddist [Buddhist] towers. The one a mound with a Saracenic tomb, the other, the more perfect, is hexagonal, the lower half in many parts quite perfect, the upper part has lost its brown stone coating, and exhibits the brickwork with hundreds of *kiln* marks on the bricks. There are some underground chambers, and the work seems not to have been finished—so the savants decide.

On excavating at its base, a few years since, a vase with more than five hundred Bhuddist "confessions of faith" were discovered. Several were given to H—who gave me one. The confession is stamped in the form of a seal on damp clay, then baked hard and enclosed in a case of fresh damp clay which is also baked. Some of them were broken open, and they found the confession perfect. Some inscriptions found here, declare these mounds to be now about a thousand years old.

Then home and to the "kin-kob" manufactory where they make the beautiful silver and gold clothes. I saw several in the looms, exquisitely beautiful. They were about five feet wide and nine yards long—these were worth $ 175—others not quite so handsome $ 150—one represented the Punjaub war, but it was not well done. I saw others not quite as handsome, to be used by the less wealthy for robes—the more valuable kinds are used by the Rajahs. I should like much to have a piece, but they work them all in such large pieces and would not cut them, and a whole piece is rather expensive when 65 per cent is added by exchanges and duties. At home I found

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some patterns of dresses much admired by ladies in England, a light material of silk and linen, embroidered with gold or silver thread in spots or small figures. It was first known in England at the exhibition, where it created more sensation than the "kinkobs," which are rivalled by the French and the Swiss, whereas this surpasses all other manufacturers, and is thought so highly of, that even the Queen sends for it. A lady selected two dresses for me with the head scarfs. I am told in the United States they are not known, and only within two years past in England, and now only sent on private orders by friends. This afternoon H— sent a note to the Rajah of Benares (they being very intimate) asking permission to take me to see him, and written in true Eastern style of hyperbolic phrases, "King of kings, light of the world," etc., etc. In a short time an answer came, couched in much the same style, beginning in this way, "The Rajah, etc., sends many compliments to Mr. Hall, endowed with all the accomplishments and virtues, master of ancient and modern lore, and inhabitant of the old and new world, etc., would he be most happy to see" me, etc.

This afternoon I visited the college, a very pretty Gothic structure, but badly built, and entirely unsuited to the purpose. They have only a few scholars, but the principal object is to furnish professors. H— and the head of the college* teach Hindoo (Hindi) and Sanscrit. I think that they doubt of its utility. They have some very valuable Sanscrit Mss here, and as yet very little else, the building and institution being new. H— dined with the Governor last evening by invitation. The Governor wrote from the Dak Bungalow to the Commissioner with whom he is staying, to invite me to his levee and dinner, but owing to some mistake the invitation did not get to H—'s house until after I had gone to Chunar, so he answered it for me. H— said I had made a wonderful impression on the Governor. (I think he must be easily pleased.) He inquired most particularly about me.

This evening we stopped for an hour or two at the Rajah's. He is not the legitimate occupant of the throne, but a puppet of the Government. He is a very fine looking man, but prematurely old from excesses. He is wealthy and lives in much style. His house is furnished beautifully, and in the European manner, and with many paintings. But with true native taste everything is odd, curious, or new. A few days since a river pedlar (pedlars who move from place to place in boats with their wares) stopped here, having among his stock in trade a number of mechanical clocks, boxes, rope-dancers, and pictures, with everything moving by machinery, musical boxes, etc. The Rajah was so delighted with them, he bought the man out. Besides all these other things, he has a miniature telegraph and globes. On the latter he desired me to show him where America was and the part we came from. As the country seemed so much larger than England or India, he probably doubted my veracity.

Then for my special benefit the Rajah ordered in some nautch girls, who danced and sung; two of whom were from Peshawur. They sung one of Hafiz's songs while dancing. Part of the air was very pretty, but the style of singing not pleasing. The dancing was graceful, but not to my taste, although perfectly chaste, consisting entirely of graceful, gliding movements, the long dress quite covering the feet. After the women had finished, a man danced; then two musicians played for us, one on a very celebrated instrument, the "vina", a bar with two gourd-like bulbs and eight

* Dr J. R. Ballantyne, the Principal.

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strings; one bulb resting on the lap, the other on the shoulder. The music is like the guitar, though not with as much depth of tone.

The whole affair was a regular Eastern "durbar". The Rajah was dressed in robes of rich "kin-kobs", and a sort of crown. The others of his suite, and wealthy natives who came in (he having sent for them to be present for the occasion), wore Cashmere shawls, and turbans. They were distributed about the rooms according to rank, and sitting on chairs or floor as suited their fancy. We sat on sofas. The Rajah showed us two little bark stands, with colored porcupine quills from Niagara, which he prized very highly.

To-morrow I start northward. Benares is a rather pleasant station, large though without much to make it very agreeable to residents. It is the great seat of native learning and missionary converts, and purely an English missionary station, mostly of Baptist and other independent denominations.'

Among the many notable things in this captivating account from Ireland is his observation of a native phrase to describe what he calls the 'official cringing' of local British officers in showing honour to authority in the person of the Governor. Ireland's distinctive outlook becomes further evident when he, unlike other travellers, observes that the newly built Sanskrit College, in spite of its 'pretty Gothic structure', was 'badly built' and 'entirely unsuited to the purpose'.

Ireland also furnishes some interesting information with regard to a Western scholar of Sanskrit from his own country in the person of Fitzedward Hall (details furnished in Chapter XII), Buddhist relics, details regarding kincaub, including prices, cholera epidemics, as well as his encounters with the British Governor and the Maharaja of Varanasi.

He also refers to the ignorance of the Maharaja regarding the United States, and this, in a way, reflects contemporary Indian ignorance of the United States in general, which, situated in a distant and less familiar continent than Europe, was only then emerging as a great nation.

It should be noted that in spite of its unique flair, Ireland's account does, however, suffer from occasional inaccuracies, such as those discussed in Chapter XII regarding his remembrances of Fitzedward Hall. We find yet another point of contention when he observes that Varanasi is a 'great seat' of 'missionary converts', the reality being quite the opposite.*

Aufschneiter was a distinguished German visitor to the City. His description and numerous sketches of Varanasi were published in a big volume around 1860 with the title of *Reisen in Indien und Zentralasien.*

* This assessment will be evident from the account on Christianity given in Chapter VI.

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Rev. M. A. Sherring's *Benares, the Sacred City of the Hindus in Ancient and Modern Times*, published in 1868, occupies a very special position among all the accounts of Varanasi. Rev. Sherring lived in nineteenth century Varanasi for a fairly long time in the capacity of a missionary of the London Missionary Society and, thus, had an opportunity to study the multidimensional life of Varanasi very closely. His protracted stay, power of keen observation, missionary zeal, and above all, his deep love for the City, induced him to produce this work. Though Sherring took help from historical and semi-historical writings in his account, he carried out much of his own research as well.

Sherring's work is more extensive than a travel account, but, again, less than a full-fledged history of Varanasi, mainly devoted to the religious and cultural life of Varanasi during the nineteenth century with occasional accounts of ancient history. Though some of his observations, that Hinduism would become extinct in India for example, have proved to be incorrect,[17] his work is still very useful to modern historians of the City and Sherring deserves credit for being a pioneer in writing a detailed and objective account of Varanasi.

Some Observations

It is evident that most of these travel accounts are repetitive and marked by casual and superficial observations and this can make their reading somewhat boring and monotonous. However, there are a few exceptions to the common run of such travelogues, such as that of Heber, which show a depth and insight of understanding of the places, people and culture these travellers encountered.

There were also few like Malachowski, a Pole, and W. Hoffmeister, a German, who stood quite apart from most of their British counterparts in that they did not disparage Varanasi, its religion or its culture, compelled by any obsessions or superiority complex. Rather, they attempted to understand and to describe the City sympathetically with a reverential attitude, contrasting drastically with accounts like that of Thomas Bacon, which may be compared with a 'drain inspector's report', as it was prone to identify and present only dirty and negative aspects.

The Distinctive Accounts of Wladyslaw Malachowski

Wladyslaw Malachowski's description of Varanasi is remarkable for its simple but warm style and comprehensive coverage, and includes almost every aspect that one would generally expect to be found in a travel

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account of the City. Malachowski gives us a faithful pen picture of nineteenth century Varanasi, and his occasional comparisons between what he saw in Varanasi and in other European cities like London, Paris and Warsaw, make his narratives all the more interesting.

With a view to giving readers a fair idea of the quality of this narrative, as well as forming a better picture of Varanasi during the nineteenth century, we will extensively quote from Malachowski's work below, presented for the first time in English from the original Polish text.[18]

His first Impression of the City

Malachowski writes about his first impressions of Varanasi saying :

> 'I think, there is no sweeter feeling, at least for me, than what was felt at the first acquaintance of this renowned city, and at first glance the form and singularity about which we had heard before from afar. The delight which we once felt on a misty morning beholding Saint Paul's Dome in London for the first time, or the famous Fort William in Calcutta glaring in dazzling sunlight, was once again experienced when looking at the ancient walls of the oldest city yet ... that is Benares.'

Even before sunrise, Malachowski, along with others, stepped into a small boat to have a general view of the City which he describes thus :

> 'Benares presents itself in a highly dignified manner from the riverside. The city is built in a semi-circular shape which the bed of the river Ganges forms at this place. Benares rises in the shape of an amphitheatre on its left bank. Till then I had had no occasion to see a city where the houses were so closely packed. The view is strikingly continuous and yet highly original in structure, amongst which domes of mosques, light minarets, Indian temples, and ancient ghats and idols are so highly compelling that one immediately realizes at first glance that the city is consecrated with the mystery of faith.
>
> The setting of immemorial antiquity which dominates the whole place by its authentic past strikes one into thinking, as it appeared to me, as if some supernatural power had carried me back several centuries. Here, no fresh ornamentation or newer architectural forms, which one encounters in the buildings and temples of Calcutta, meet the eye, but everywhere a raw simplicity and particular originality (incomparable with anything) of the early worship of Great Brahma have continued to remain inviolably.'

Scenes at the Ghats

Malachowski then goes into detail regarding the ghats :

> 'Not only the river bank but also the river was crowded with innumerable people; some had taken a little water in their palms and were saying their prayers ardently, some sprinkled water from a copper vessel bowing down to the river, others stretched out their arms, and chanting prayers, went round in a circle. At the same time a large number of ladies, covered down to their feet with long veils, moved

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along the high ghats like light shadows. In the riverbed itself were many pagodas (temples) and beds for the diseased and others in agony.'

A temple that rose up from the Ganga is described thus :

'It had two towers inclined to it forming an acute angle with the surface of the river. Neither the origin nor the significance of these structures could be divined by me, but it is impossible to accept the version of some tourist that the inclination of these towers was produced by the result of the action of water, because in that case, these would have completely worn out long ago. It is easier to think that the architects of these structures preceded those of the tower of Pisa and Bolonia by many centuries, and surpassed them in a fantastic and bold undertaking to build these, not on the surface of land, but from the depths of the water.'

The City seen from the Minarets of the Aurangzeb Mosque

Like most foreign travellers of the day, Malachowski also climbed the *Venimadhab ki Dharara* to witness the panoramic view of the City from atop the mosque. He records the following in this connection :

'The most remarkable edifice in Benares is the Mosque of Emperor Aurangzeb, built at the highest place of the city, on which some famous Indian temple stood at one time. This memorable persecutor of idolatry ordered the destruction of this temple in order to immortalize the triumph of his own faith. Two minarets at its sides raised to a height of 145 feet command a view over the whole of the City and announce this triumph to newcomers to Benares from a distance. If the city appears so original from the riverside, nothing can equal the strange and picturesque panorama which unveils itself from the top of the minarets. Here no symmetry of streets and lanes can be seen as can be generally marked in other towns, but one can see only a mass of tall, closely packed houses separated by serpentine footpaths. For it is difficult to give any other name to the streets of Benares along which the twisting multitude of people move hastily about like ants.

From these minarets the view stretches merrily from the trimmed stone (of the city) to a vast expanse of adjacent countryside which is beautifully cultivated and densely populated. Amongst other objects, the eye often sees pagodas (temples), *caravanserai*, old palaces, and the palace-like houses of the rich inhabitants. The fortress of Chunnar and the hillock rising behind it are visible at a distance. People say that the Himalayan Mountains are also sometimes visible from here; but when we visited the city the weather was so fine that we would have certainly seen them if they could be visible at any time whatsoever.'

Streets and Houses of Varanasi

At this time one Gordon, an English negotiator living in Varanasi, invited Malachowski and his party to his residence during their entire stay in the City. He records the following about this residence :

'It was a very fine country house called a "bungalo" with exquisite verandas situated in a small garden and standing beyond the city on quite a raised upland on

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the same bank of the Ganges. Briefly speaking, it was as if we were in our own house.'

One evening Malachowski set out on horse back accompanied by others for sight-seeing in the City which had 'aroused' their 'curiosity' so much. He observed minutely the street scenes and the houses and leaves the following description :

'We toiled for a long time through narrow streets which were badly and wretchedly constructed, as we began to approach closer and closer to the centre of the city the houses looked more orderly, but the streets became narrower still. Finally, they became so narrow that it was only barely possible to force our way through the crowd in single file on horse back. Almost all the houses were built of stone up to four or five stories high which I had not seen in India before this. These houses were antique, or borrowed from Indian mythology and painted outside in brilliant colours. These houses usually stood on small platforms a little higher than street level, and there were often galleries at the top connecting to houses opposite.

Narrow were the pigeon holes (of road) left for passers-by, still far and scattered brahmin bulls lay in these. Anyone who, God forbid, does not want to draw the wrath of the fantastic crowd upon him, does not push or drive these bulls out of one's way. Jumping monkeys were often seen on porches and projections that steal from the sweet shops, but the holiness of their character shielded them from injury. On rooftops, birds, particularly parrots, were chirping, while at the same time small fakir sheds adorned with idols at street corners were resounding with bells and drums. Mendicants, pilgrims, various kinds of ascetics with wringing (trussed) limbs through penance, covered with lime and cow dung and begging for alms, struck the eye and ear everywhere.'

The scenes of the congested streets of Varanasi reminded Malachowski of two famous old cities of Europe :

'I could not desist from comparing these scenes with those I met with in the streets of London and Paris, and could not ascribe these to the distance separating these cities from one another.'

Malachowski visited the *chowk* which was the central market-place of the City and also the animal markets :

'At last we went to a rectangular area similar to the market in the old part of Warsaw City. Here we recovered our breath in free air after such a closely packed multitude of people. It was the main market, which was situated under the projections of houses and balconies where the multitude of people could move about hurriedly. Benares, however, may take pride in the sale of the costliest products, the store-houses of which are inside houses and hidden from the eyes of passers by. Due to this the city has lost much of the external magnificence of its streets. The horse market is situated not far from this market.'*

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* For further details of market-places, see Chapter IX.

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A City of Temples and Beggars

'The following day we went to another part of this highly interesting city where there were a large number of temples. Amongst these some were distinguished for the rare beauty of their flat sculptural work imitating flowers, leaves, and various animals. Some of these temples stood on the edge of clear water tanks, the water of which is worshipped equally with Ganges water, and pilgrims visiting this holy town obligatorily drink this water as the first rite. The figures of the bull of Shiva or the Lingam made of stone on which these pious people poured water from the Ganges or decorated flowers and garlands were placed more or less in every street corner. Sellers sat with baskets of flowers at the folding doors of temples to sell these for offering to the beloved deity.'

Malachoswki, considerate though he usually was, reacts adversely when he encountered beggars, as evidenced by the following :

'Here eyes could not enjoy for long and mind could not be engaged with novelty of objects showing on the streets of the City, as these would soon be filled with the everyday crowd and the usual bustle and clamour would start. The most persevering observer would be forced to flight from the throng of religious beggars and shouting of "Ram Ram" ("Ram Ram" is a sort of greeting cum prayer) which pours out incessantly. It is difficult to imagine the enormity of number and troublesomeness of brahmins living on alms in Benares who, as religious law-givers, have commanded people to supply their livings for the maintenance of caste. They are not modest and timid beggars, but are like extortionists who insolently demand tribute as if it were their due. The sum of money extorted in this way is enormous. At the same time, the life they lead is not at all pious, but such is the power of long-rooted subjugation and religious feeling that even the poorest of people give them a part of their own necessities without grumbling or loathing.'

Malachowski committed a mistake here by placing beggar Brahmins at one with the 'law giver' Brahmins. Moreover, his sweeping remark that the Brahmin beggars of this place led an immoral life is again subject to question. But his comment that the long-time subjugation of the Indians and their religious feelings were mostly responsible for the enormity of beggars is definitely worth-considering.

Tradition and Myth

Malachowski was especially struck by the antiquity of Varanasi and its continuity of tradition, observing :

'How greatly one's mind experiences a sensation at the sight of the remnants of such a distant past: wherever one steps, centuries have left their indelible traces, and what is more strange is that the entire incalculable past exists before our eyes, just as if Pompei or Herculanium still existed on the earth with all their remnants and inhabitants. The inhabitants of Benares have not changed from their ancestors from the time of Law-maker Manu or from the period of the conquests of Alexander of

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Macedon, and the same faith and customs have been adhered to. The temples of Shiva and Vishnu have not assumed the architectural designs of Greeks or Semians, nor has the knowledge of Indian sages been enlarged by the discoveries of Newton or Copernicus, but still they (Indians) stand solidly on Ptolemy's system which was actually borrowed from Indians.'

The traveller next visited the Government Sanskrit College of Varanasi and writes :

'The main college for delivering lectures in Sanskrit language is in Benares. Here the holy books (Vedas) are explained. The learning of Brahmins of this place is held in esteem in the whole of Hindustan. Some princes and rajas of India have maintained here their own priests whose duty is to perform due sacrifices and ablutions in the name of their master.'

Malachowski proceeds to narrate popular beliefs, especially concerning Lord Shiva, in Varanasi, with the following :

'Benares (Kashi) is considered the most sacred place in India.... The famous Lingam which is present here is taken to be the petrifaction of the Lord Shiva. According to local tradition, this city was formerly built of gold but it has been reduced to the present state due to the sins of people. The Brahmins say that Benares has no point of contact with the earth which stands on a hundred heads of the Serpent, *Ananta* (the everlasting), while the city of Benares is supported on three teeth of Shiva, the proof of which is that there is never any earthquake in Benares. Innumerable pilgrims from all parts of Hindustan come to this holy town and a few days' stay here ensures entry into the paradise of Shiva. Most of these people from distant provinces come for a dip in the Ganges, which nowhere else has such salvation-giving properties as beneath the walls of Benares. Many rich people make haste to come here to die and offer gifts to Brahmins.'

Account of Ramnagar

This traveller also visited Ramnagar, leaving the following account :

'The riverside opposite to that on which Benares lies, is empty and uncultivated and is called *Vyas Kashi*. The legend goes that on a certain day, the great sage Vyas, the writer of the Vedas, on having some differences of opinion with Shiva, started building a town across the river from Kashi which he hoped would eclipse Benares. Shiva, the God of destruction, got frightened and sent his son Ganesh, the god of wisdom, to artfully check this plan. Ganesh succeeded in becoming a disciple of Vyas and went on asking him every day what the effect of a stay and death in this town would be. This question was so often repeated that at last the sage lost his patience and replied in anger that its inhabitants would be asses in their next birth. As a result of these imprudent words, Vyas was forced to give up all hope for his plan, and since that time few think of residing in Vyas Kashi, a place of ill-fame due to this curse and the justified fear of future degradation.'

Hindu-Muslim Relations

Malachowski referred to the strained Hindu-Muslim relations in the

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City and in this connection he briefly described the Hindu-Muslim conflict that had taken place in 1809 and had overpowered Varanasi. Malachowski also witnessed the Durga Puja, celebrated with great eclat, and he left a pen-picture of the celebration.*

He obviously visited Secrole, where most of the Europeans resided, and records the following about the place :

> 'The European Colony of Secrole lies half a mile beyond the city. All the English officers live there and the garrison stays in camp. This colony has many beautiful houses which can pass in our country as palaces. It has a church and even a small theatre which is very elegantly decorated. This place looks externally like a desert due to the absence of trees. The air is dry and hot in the beginning of spring and is very unpleasant in Central India, but the climate of Benares is dry and far healthier than that of Bengal.'

With the help of a letter of recommendation from Lord William Bentink, Governor-General of India, he met W. A. Brooke, the local Agent to the Governor-General, the oldest official of the East India Company, and the chief official of Benares Province.

Malachowski was once invited by a European indigo planter to his country house. On the occasion of this visit, he witnessed the countryside near Varanasi and was charmed by it. He records in this connection :

> 'We made another excursion from Benares to the house of Mr. Williamson, a settler and indigo-planter settled in Chutwa, a very advantageously situated village, about two miles from the City. Here we were accorded nothing but a pleasant stay and a hospitable welcome. During our journey to that place we were indeed astonished at the excellently maintained highway and beauty of the countryside. Cultivation of land in this surrounding is so excellent, careful, and all-pervading that a picture of a continuous garden is presented. I was even told that for this reason, no game is to be found here at all. Orchards of thickly planted fruit trees divided the fields. Numerous villages followed one after another, bridges over rivers are built with stone; views of such immense wealth, peace, and public security, charm the eye everywhere, which only a few countries in Europe may boast of.'

He came across a beautiful caravan *sarai* named 'Monkey Sarai' or 'Hanuman Sarai' during this journey and leaves a valuable and precise description of this establishment.

Varanasi, the City Extraordinary

Malachowski had travelled extensively to different parts of the world and gave a unique position to Varanasi among all the cities he had seen. His account also gives us a fair idea of the things of the City that formed

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* For further details, see Chapter VII.

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the points of interest to foreign visitors in general, the impressions of which, however, varied from person to person.

INDIAN TRAVELLERS

We have furnished below the names of Indian travellers with brief notes regarding their accounts of the City :

Vijayram Sen, a Bengalee by birth, was a physician by profession and a poet by nature. He visited the City in 1769 along with a big party headed by his patron, Krishnachandra Ghoshal of Calcutta; the party journeyed all the way by boat. Vijayram left a Bengali account of his travel in verse entitled *Teerthamangal*. This book, though not exhaustive, furnishes important historical data and is remarkable in that his is one of the earliest accounts of the City in the Modern Age. The work was published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in 1322 BS in Calcutta.

Becharam Nyayalankar, a Bengalee Sanskrit scholar, most probably lived in Chandannagar, Bengal. He left an account of his journey from his home to Varanasi, which is still unpublished and has been lying in manuscript form. Possibly, his is the only available account of Varanasi in Sanskrit during this period. The title of his work is *Anandatarangini*, dated 1801 AD (*Shaka* 1725). A commentary was also written on this work entitled, *Siddhantatari*.[19]

Raja Jayanarayan Ghoshal was one of the most distinguished persons of Varanasi during this period. Jayanarayan's detailed account of Varanasi, written around the beginning of the nineteenth century, was not originally an independent monograph but formed part of the Sanskrit *Kashi Khandam*, written in Bengali script and translated into Bengali verse. Later, his account of the City was published separately under the title *Kashi Parikrama* by Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in Calcutta, long before Rev. Sherring wrote his book on Varanasi.

Asadulla Beg Khan,[20] later known as **Mirza Ghalib**, was born in Agra in 1797 and passed away in 1869 at the age of seventy-two. Ghalib, who is considered the greatest poet of Urdu literature, was an author of many works in Urdu and Persian among which the most celebrated is a book of Urdu poetry entitled *Diwani-i-Ghalib*. A Sufi by religious faith, and a worshipper of humanity, he was free from the exclusiveness and orthodoxy of the average Muslims of his time. He had an exceptionally broad vision and catholicity of outlook that enabled him to appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of the culture of peoples other than his own.

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He came to Varanasi sometime in August-September 1827 from Delhi on his way to Calcutta in connection with his plea for a pension with the Calcutta High Court. At first, he stayed here with an old woman in the *sarai* of Aurangabad for a few days and later moved to the palace of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The total period of his stay in the City was about four months. During that time he witnessed the colourful life of Varanasi, which struck the imagination of his sensitive and creative mind. His deep appreciation of this place was formally expressed in the following letter to his friend, Mohmmad Ali Khan :

> 'This city (Varanasi) is so beautiful and lovely that even a stranger fails to remember his suffering. If there had been no fear of religious contempt and criticism from the enemies, I should have left my religion and counted my beads, worn a sacred thread, put a mark on my forehead and in this way I would have passed my life on the bank of the Ganga.'

Ghalib's love and adoration for Varanasi found its best expression in the form of a poem of one hundred and eight stanzas in Persian, under the title *Chirag-i-Dair*, that is, *Light of the Lamp*, in which he recalls some of the things he had witnessed or experienced in Varanasi. For example, in it he mentions the City's scenic beauty, innumerable gardens, and the religious practices and beliefs of its people; he particularly describes in detail the courtesans of the City and their art, for which Varanasi was quite famous from ancient times. He also compares Delhi, his place of residence and the long seat of the Muslim Emperors of India, with Varanasi in this poem that concludes :[21]

Benares is a beautiful, attractive painting
And Delhi must always worship it.
Perhaps Delhi had seen Benares in Dream,
And got its mouth watered with greed, flowing now as in a canal.
It's not wrong to say : 'Delhi is jealous of Benares.'
It's no wonder Delhi wants to be like Benares.

Ghalib's *Chirag-i-Dair* has not only literary value, but also historical value. Below are a few couplets which contain descriptions of Varanasi and refer to the beliefs of the Hindus regarding this City :[22]

Those who die in this great city, Kashi
Get liberation from the transmigration.

... ...

Either be spring, cold or summer season
Benares presents heavenly glory in all.

... ...

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The city is the worship-place for conch-shell-user Hindus,
And the greatest seat of pilgrimage of Hindustan.

Enugula Veeraswamy, a devout Telegu Brahmin of Madras, mastered as many as four important languages namely Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit, and English and served the British Government as one of its employees. Veeraswamy started his long pilgrimage to Varanasi by palanquin from his native place in Madras on May 18, 1830, and after visiting a number of important places such as, Tirupati, Cuddapah, Ahobalam, Hyderabad, Vemulavada, Nirmal, Dhanora, Nagpur, Ramatenki, Jabbalpur, Ruma, Mirazpur and Prayag, over a period of five months, he finally arrived at Varanasi on October 17, and thus fulfilled his long cherished dream of visiting this great pilgrim centre.

He stayed here for about seven weeks, residing in a house near Kedar Ghat. He performed all the religious rites of a devout Hindu and, thus, completing his pilgrimage in Varanasi, he then embarked on his homeward journey on December 17, 1830. On his way back, he followed the eastern route and again traversed many important places, and finally returned to Madras on September 3, 1831. His account of Varanasi, entitled *Kasiyatra Charitra*, includes descriptions of the local deities and their worship, excesses committed by the Gangaputras, socio-religious customs of its inhabitants, the local European settlement, topography of the City, its Phatakbandi System, study of the Vedas by local Brahmins, etc., and also some pieces of information on the day-to-day life of the place and occasional discussions on theology. Veeraswamy's travelogue, originally written as letters to one of his friends, in Telugu, and later translated into English, was published by the Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Manuscript Library and Research Institute in 1973. This work is highly interesting and valuable for the study of Varanasi during this period.

An excerpt from the *Kasiyatra Charitra* is quoted here as a specimen of his account :

'I had no trouble with this band (of Gangaputras) as I had earlier contracted with one Ramarahallu, a Gangaputra at Ramatenki itself; I had drawn up and obtained an agreement from him at Gopiganj itself that he would take whatever I gave him as fees and arrange for the completion of the pilgrimage according to custom at Kashi. He therefore accompanied me to Prayag and entered Kashi along with me.

According to custom, I had a bath in the Manikarnika within a few minutes of my arrival; one Mohur with flowers and fruits was offered by me for "Beti" (*Bhet*) at Chakra-theertham, and I had a bath first. Later after "sankalpa" the shaving ceremony was gone through; after this I had a bath in the Manikarnika and

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performed worship of the Ganges. Thereafter, I gifted away a sum of fifteen rupees as "dakshina" to all Gangaputras; a sum of ten rupees for Ghatiyas who serve on the bathing ghats of the Ganges, and another five rupees to *kangalis* (beggars) and entered my camping place. I then arranged for the "Teertha Shraddhams" to be performed by all the Brahmins who accompanied me. I myself performed these ceremonies on the fourth day. All sects of Brahmins in great number are available here and I sent for fifty Brahmins each from every sect for "adhishvavans" and "Ishta banthi" (meaning feast) and gave them each a dakshina of four annas.'[23]

John : An account of Varanasi in Bengali, entitled *Tirther Vivaran* and written by one 'John', was published in Calcutta in 1840. This book was written with a clear motive of undermining Hinduism and extolling Christianity and, thus, proving the superiority of Christianity over Hinduism. The book informs us that 'John' was formerly a Hindu monk and a Bengalee by birth, who later on embraced Christianity; he had visited many holy places of the Hindus while he was a monk and he claimed that he had, thus, become aware of the dark sides of these holy places, including Varanasi. The author confides in the preface of his book that it was written with the specific purpose of making the people aware of the evils of Hinduism, so that they would give up Hinduism, embrace Christianity, and thereby get salvation.

Jadunath Sarvadhikari came to Varanasi from Bengal around 1854 for pilgrimage and stayed for a short time. He returned here after two years and eight months and stayed on for about a year. His account of the City forms part of his travelogue entitled *Tirthabhraman* written in Bengali and published in Calcutta. Apart from giving stray pieces of information on miscellaneous subjects, *Tirthabhraman* gives us details on the market-places of Varanasi. It also contains an important description of the Sepoy Mutiny and how it affected Varanasi.

Vishnubhatta Godse Varsaikar, a Maharashtrian by birth, lived in a village in the district of Thana where he studied the Vedas and became proficient in the performance of Vedic rituals. His income being insufficient, he contracted a heavy debt and in expectation of getting large fees as a priest in a grand sacrifice to be performed at Mathura by the Maharani of Gwalior, he set out for Mathura. Soon after he left home, he encountered turbulent sepoys here and there, as the Sepoy Mutiny had just broken out. Even this could not stop the journey of this daring young priest of about twenty-nine years and he got as far as Varanasi via Lucknow.

Upon reaching Varanasi, he took *darshan* of Vakratunda Ganapati (Ganesha) over the Varuna and then went to the residence of one Kelkar,

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another Maharashtrian, in the Brahma Ghat area. Finally, on receiving a letter from his parents, he changed his mind and decided to return home from there.

The travel account written by him in Marathi was published under the title, *Majha Pravas*, and its Hindi translation was published later on in 2005 VS in Varanasi under the title, *Mera Pravas*. This book is especially valuable for the history of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, as the author records his firsthand experiences of the Mutiny in detail. But he did not give any details regarding his residence in Varanasi. He remarked in this connection that he refrained from describing in detail what he had witnessed in Varanasi and other pilgrim-centres like Prayag, as otherwise, the book would have become too voluminous.

Bholanauth Chunder, a Bengali traveller, reached the City on October 25, 1860. He wrote the account of his visit here in English in his book, *The Travels of a Hindoo to Various Parts of Bengal and Upper India*. The book was published in two volumes in 1869 in London, and was dedicated to Sir John Lawrence, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. A member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Bholanauth belonged to the class of neo-Hindu intellectuals of Bengal who had been largely influenced by the modern ideas of the West and who were faithful to the British Government. Thus, though Bholanauth called himself a 'Hindu' in this work, his is not the account of a typical Hindu pilgrim, but that of a critical Hindu intellectual of the Modern Age who was ready to accept and appreciate only that which stood the tests of reason, equity and justice according to Western standards. Though he was not a disbeliever in rites and forms, he beheld many things in the City worthy of criticism and condemnation. The characteristic of his outlook is best revealed when he comments that 'the really worthiest object of all to see in Benares is its college,' referring to the newly built Queen's College. Thus, his account is remarkable not so much for a richness of content, but for the distinct treatment of the subject as a 'modern' Hindu and also for his colourful style of writing. In addition to the excerpts from Bholanauth's account, which have already been quoted in a different context, one more passage is quoted here to illustrate his style :

> 'It (Benares) is the oldest post-deluvian City on the globe. Nineveh, Babylon and others had been its contemporaries, but they are all in desolation, while Benares is still in its glory. The cities of the Allophylians are now without even a name, much less a trace. The cities of the Aryans have shared nearly the same fate. Benares is

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the only town of pre-historic antiquity that yet survives to link the ancient world with the modern and present a retrospect through a vista of several hundred years.'[24]

OTHER ASIAN TRAVELLERS

Nepal, a neighbouring state of India, is an old Hindu kingdom, the widely worshipped deity of which is Lord Shiva. Naturally, to the Nepalese, Varanasi, the chief seat of Hinduism having special association with Shiva, posed a great attraction. While many would visit the City on pilgrimage, some Nepalese made this place their home and identified themselves with its religious and cultural life.

Buddhist pilgrims from Burma, Tibet, China and, presumably, also from Ceylon visited Varanasi during the period of review since this City and, especially, nearby Saranath were both associated with the hallowed memory of Lord Buddha. Unfortunately, details regarding these pilgrims are wanting.

Though Japan is also largely a Buddhist country—Buddhism being introduced there as early as the sixth century A.D.—Varanasi did not receive any Japanese pilgrims or travellers probably until the end of the nineteenth century. Definitive information regarding early Japanese visits—let alone any first ever such visit—is hardly available.

The Meiji Restoration of 1868 led to the opening of Japan after a long period of isolation and its consequent modernization. It was in this backdrop that Reverend Takuyu Umegami of the Shin sect of Japanese Buddhism, being induced by Reverend Myonyo, the head obo-san (monk/priest) of the same sect, undertook a foreign travel in 1872 and visited various countries of Europe[25]. Reverend Mokurai Shimaji, another priest of the Shin sect, also accompanied him during this visit[26]. The purpose of their visit was to get exposure to and make a comparative study of the religions of the outside world. While Umegami returned to Japan next year, Shimaji also visited Turkey, Egypt, Jerusalem and finally sailed on to India. During this trip to India in 1873, Reverend Shimaji was accompanied by Genichiro Fukuchi whom he had met in Europe[27]*.

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* Genichiro Fukuchi (1841-1906) knew a number of European languages and was the director of a Japanese journal. Later on he founded the Kabuki-za (Japanese traditional theatre) and worked as its manager and playwright. He also became a member of the House of Representatives of the Japanese Parliament. *Nihon Jinmei Daijiten* (*Who is Who in Japan*), pp. 317-18.

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They landed in Bombay and proceeded to visit Buddhist holy sites. Shimaji mentions in his travel diary that they reached Allahabad on June 5, 1873, and left for Patna on June 7, both by train[28]. In that day most travellers passed through Varanasi *en route* from Allahabad to Patna and it would seem only natural and even expected that a devout Buddhist, especially one who had come from so distant a country as Japan, would pay a visit to Varanasi and Saranath. But nowhere does the Reverend make any reference to their visit to these places and it is, therefore, doubtful that they paid such a visit. Shimaji and Fukuchi most likely failed to make this pilgrimage because they were travelling by train during this leg of their journey and no direct train route passing through Varanasi between Allahabad and Patna yet existed.*

The first recorded Japanese visitors to Varanasi were Doryu Kitabatake, a Buddhist obo-san, and his companion, Yuji Kurosaki.** Reverend Kitabatake first visited Europe and America with the objective to observe firsthand the state of religion in these lands and later came to India for the sole purpose of making a pilgrimage to the 'holy monument of Lord Buddha', arriving in 1883. During this journey Kitabatake and Kurosaki also visited Varanasi.

While there is only a passing reference to their sojourn in the City in *Kitabatake Doryu shi Indo Kiko* (*Master Doryu Kitabatake's Indian Travelogue*), we get some details of the Reverend's visit from his talk on Indian pilgrimage delivered on May 31, 1884, just a few months after his return to Japan.[29] A free translation of excerpts from Kitabatake's talk is presented below:

'... (From Bombay) I came to Allahabad and from there reached Varanasi. ... Varanasi has a population of about 280,000 and the Golden

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* The train by which Shimaji and Fukuchi travelled from Allahabad to Patna was, of course, a through train, but it would have run in a different direction from Varanasi, passing through Mirzapur and Mughalserai, without requiring a crossing of the Ganga. The other alternative train route from Allahabad to Patna that would stop in Varanasi was not a direct route, there being no railway bridge across the Ganga until 1887, and such travellers would have to cross the Ganga by boat and board a train from the opposite bank. Whether or not there was direct service to Patna from there or whether one would have had to make a connection at Mughalserai is difficult to determine.

** Yuji Kurosaki studied Law in England. Shichibei—*Kitabatake Doryu shi Indo Kiko*, p.2.

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Temple is situated here. The Temple's height is approximately 8 "jo" (26.51 yards) with a circumference of 4.5 "jo" (14.91 yards). The name "Golden Temple" is fully justified since the roof is covered with golden plates ... I bought a rosary in front of the Golden Temple which I now use.... Here I enquired of the whereabouts of the holy monument of Lord Buddha, but no one could answer.

Next I visited an astronomical observatory on the bank of the river (Ganga).... One of the instruments was designed to observe the pole-star ... another was a sundial. Here again I asked about the Buddha monument and someone told me I would find it in Gaya. I was so delighted to hear of this ! ... I immediately proceeded to Gaya without a thought to my health or anything else....'

The next recorded Japanese traveller, Bunyu Nanjo, was also a Buddhist obo-san of the Shin sect and a distinguished scholar of both Buddhist theology and Sanskrit[30]. He studied Buddhist scriptures in Sanskrit in Oxford from 1876 to 1884 when he had the good fortune to come in close contact with Professor F. M. Max Müller, the celebrated Indologist of Oxford. He is also said to have translated some Sanskrit texts into English jointly with Max Müller[31].

While in India, Reverend Nanjo made a hectic tour to Varanasi reaching that place by train from Mughalserai on February 25, 1887[32]. During the few hours he spent there he took a guide and visited Saranath, thus possibly being the first Japanese to visit this site, which, sadly enough, was then lying in ruins. Next Reverend Nanjo visited the Sanskrit College and must have been delighted to meet an old acquaintance from Oxford, a European named Mr. Sifnal (?), whom he described as 'kocho' (principal) of the College[33]*. Finally, he also managed to take in the City's vast riverfront from the boat and observed worshippers engaged in spiritual practices along the ghats.

There is a possibility that in addition to these travellers known to posterity, there were other unrecorded and unknown visitors from Japan. In any case, the number of these travellers must have remained insignificant until the turn of the twentieth century. The situation, however, changed dramatically towards the end of the same century when the number of Japanese visitors increased enormously with hundreds of them

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* According to the Sanskrit College magazine published in 1942, however, Dr G. Thibaut was the principal in 1887.

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flocking to Varanasi and Saranath every year for both pilgrimage and sightseeing, and in certain cases, spiritual quest as well.

OBJECTS OF INTEREST

Among all who left accounts of their visits to Varanasi, it is Fa Hien whose account contains the earliest available description of the City. Since the visit of Fa Hien and other travellers to the City down to today, scores of accounts have been written on Varanasi. It appears from the dates of the accounts that more of them were written in the nineteenth century than in any of the preceding centuries, which marks the beginning of increasing interest of people all over the world in Varanasi.

Travel accounts left by both Indians and Westerners were mostly illustrated with pictures, especially of the ghats, the Ganga, temples, street-scenes, etc. Moreover, the following were usually the subjects of their descriptions of Varanasi :

The riverfront with the majestic flights of steps in the long line of ghats; scenes of ghats and banks and the boat-journey on the Ganga; the innumerable temples, especially those of Vishwanatha, Annapurna, Durga and Kalabhairava, with large numbers of devotees praying, chanting, singing and ringing bells; the flower and fruit-sellers, and the big tanks close to the temples; the mosques, especially Aurangzeb Mosque, with its two lofty minarets and the City viewed from these minarets; the multi-storied stone-built mansions and small dwelling houses; the streets and narrow serpentine-like lanes crowded with all types of people including worshippers and the roaming bulls; the market places with innumerable shops selling silk, cotton, brass and zinc products and *kincaub*, or jewelry, sweetmeats, toys, perfumes and other necessary and fashionable articles; the various kinds of people, including monks, *fakirs*, Brahmins, aristocrats, *mahajans*, pilgrims, beggars, folk musicians and dancers; religious ceremonies, fairs, festivals, rituals, and the Panchakroshi circum-ambulation; the socio-religious customs; the educational institutions, especially the Government Sanskrit College and the Jaynaryan School; the *Manmandir*, or observatory; the large gardens of trees and plants of various fruits (especially *vilva* and mango), and flowers; the Hindu-Muslim relations; the Christian missionary societies and the European colony at Secrole; and, finally, descriptions of Ramnagar and Saranath.

Among all these subjects, almost every traveller described the following things : the riverfront, temples, street scenes, minarets of the

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Aurangzib Mosque and the City as viewed from there, shops and market-places and, last but not least, the Manmandir,[34] that is, the observatory built by Raja Jay Singh who became the King of Jaypur in 1693.[35]

IMPACT OF TRAVEL ACCOUNTS

The prodigious number of travel-accounts on India, including Varanasi, written especially in English during this period, shows a great demand for such accounts among British readers who presumably would go through the descriptions of this remote, rich and mysterious land, which was a part of their Eastern empire, with great interest. Again, Varanasi, being the main seat of a culture of long tradition, must have also been an object of special interest to Western scholars.

So far as Varanasi is concerned, the immediate impact of these travel accounts on the Europeans, as already alluded to in Chapter I, was their becoming increasingly interested in this City, and desirous of visiting it. Consequently, people from the West joined with the people of the East in 'pilgrimage' to this City of long antiquity and rich heritage, 'which might well be called the India within India (*Indo no uchi no Indo*).'[36]

The accounts left by both Indians and Western visitors filled in many gaps of the history of Varanasi, which could not otherwise have been filled by Governmental and other records.

Above all, some of these travelogues were written with the sensitivity and warmth of personal experience, and thereby contributed largely to the transformation of a dry chronicle of the City into a lively and interesting historical account. Thus, travellers and their accounts, in spite of their shortcomings, played a vital role in constructing the history of Varanasi during this important period of transition from the Medieval to the Modern Age.

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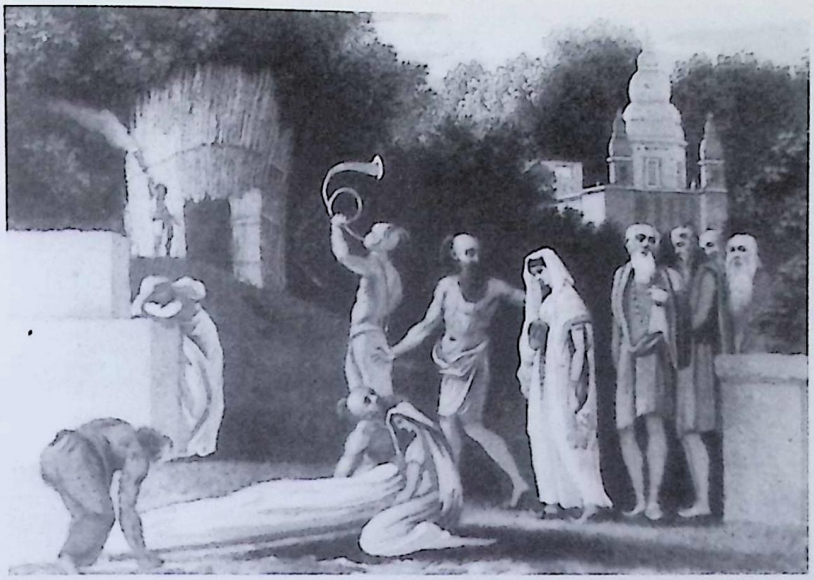

75. 'Sati' : William Hodges, 1781

76. Women worshipping at a ghat :
E.B. Havell, 1905

77. Sati stone : E.B. Havell, 1905

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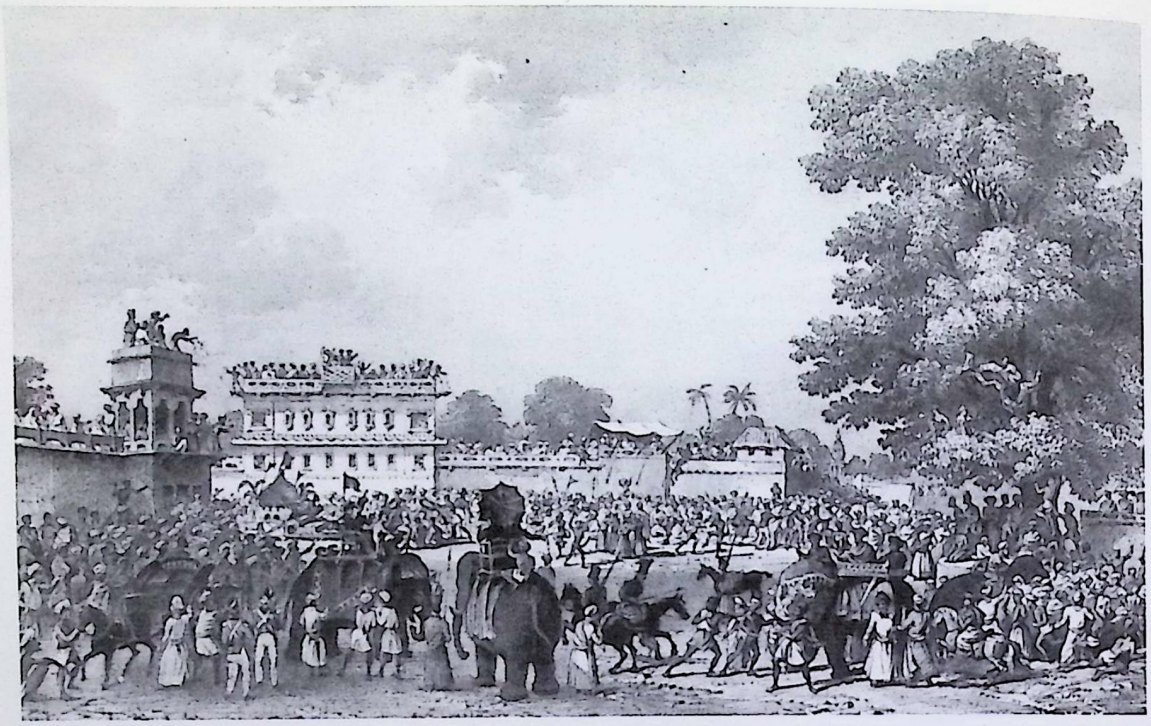

78. Lunar Eclipse : James Prinsep, 1831

79. Bharat Milap : James Prinsep, 1831

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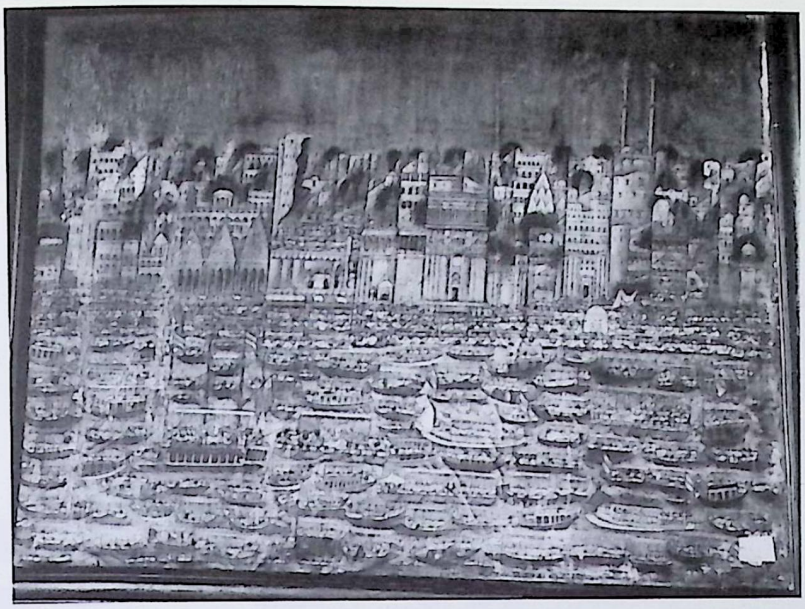

80. Buḍhwamangal boat festival :
an old painting in Ramnagar Fort Palace Museum

81. Buḍhwamangal from Chet Singh Ghat :
James Prinsep, 1831

82. Muharram : James Prinsep, 1831

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83. Ramsahay
Founder of the 'Banaras Baaj'
(a Tabla Gharana)

84. Dancing woman Ali Bandi :
James Prinsep, 1831

85. A group of Musicians at a European's residence :
James Prinsep, 1831

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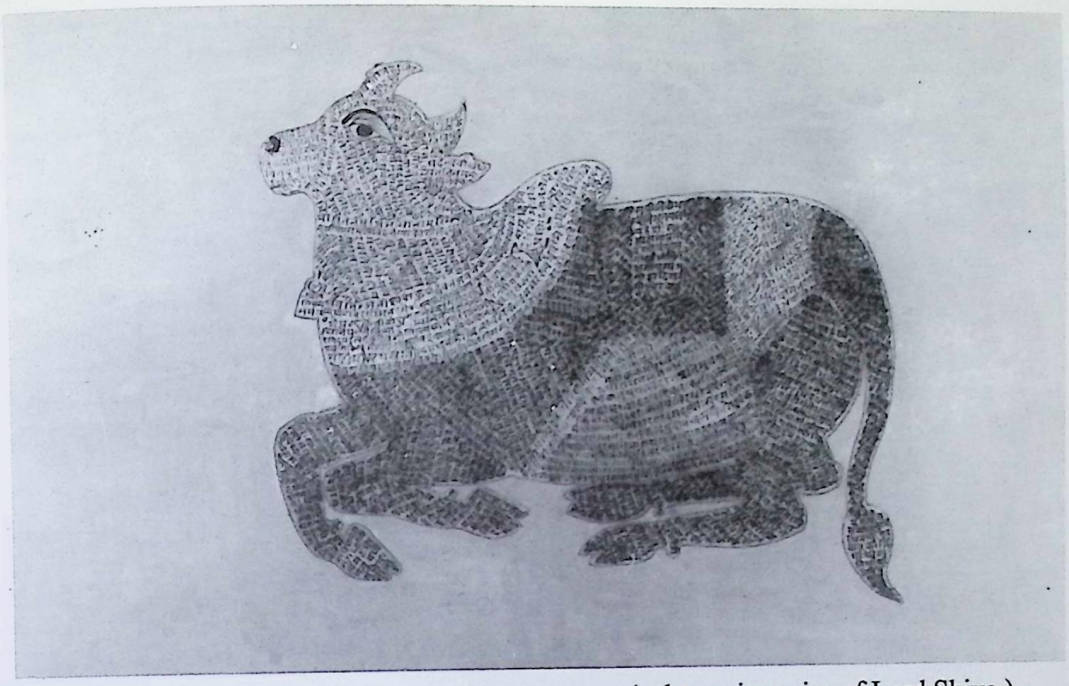

86. Bull inscribed with *Shivamahimnastotram* (a hymn in praise of Lord Shiva)
Early 19th century painting : Traditional Banaras School

87. Krishna & Radha :
Company School of Painting

88. An Army Major Hunting : Dallulal, 1851
Company School of Painting

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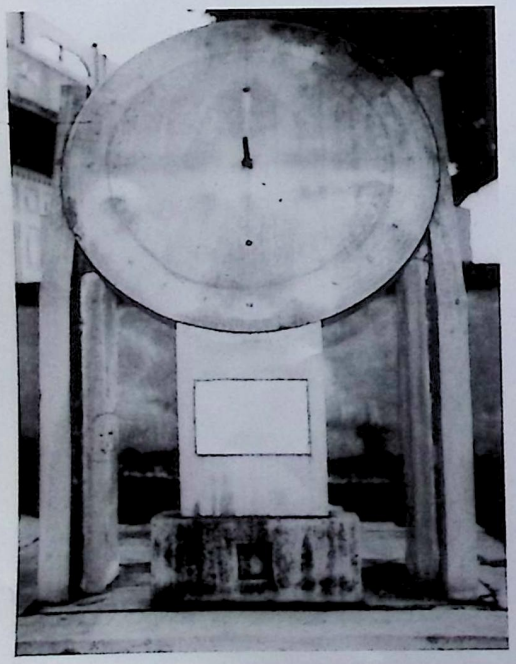
89. Some Astronomical instruments at the Manmandir (above & below)



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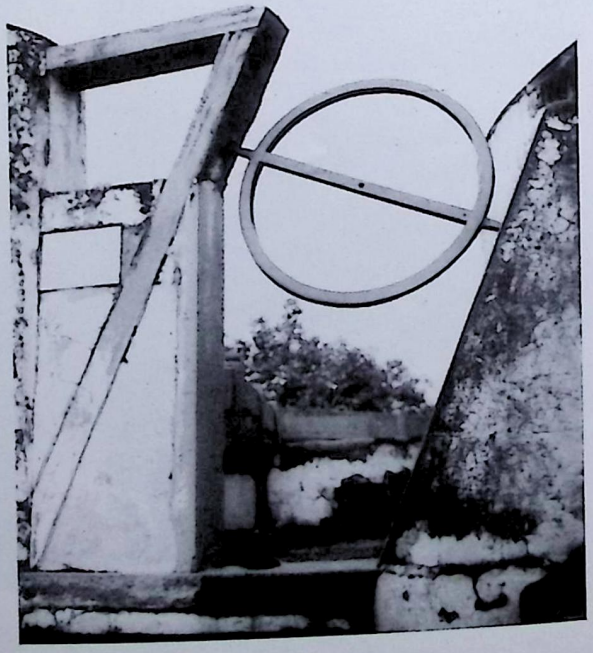

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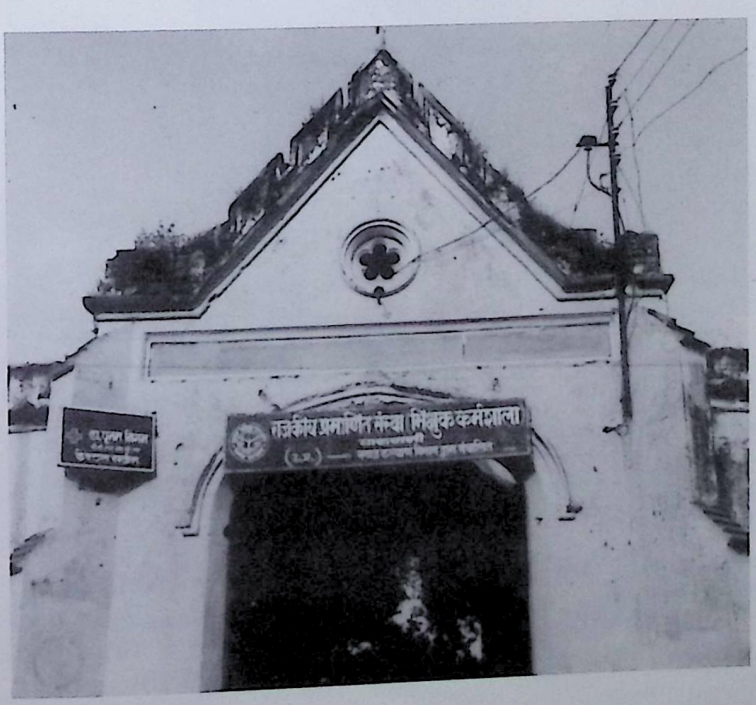
92. Thatheri Bazar : James Prinsep, 1831



93. The Blind Asylum

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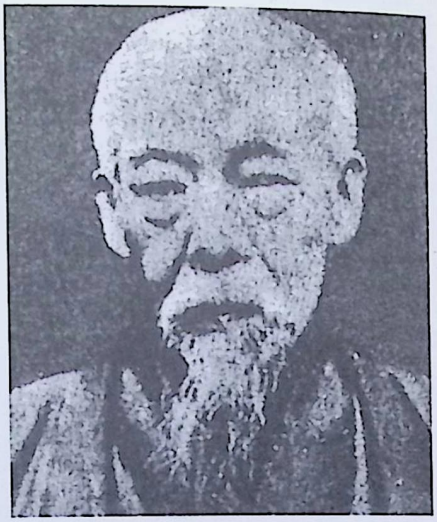
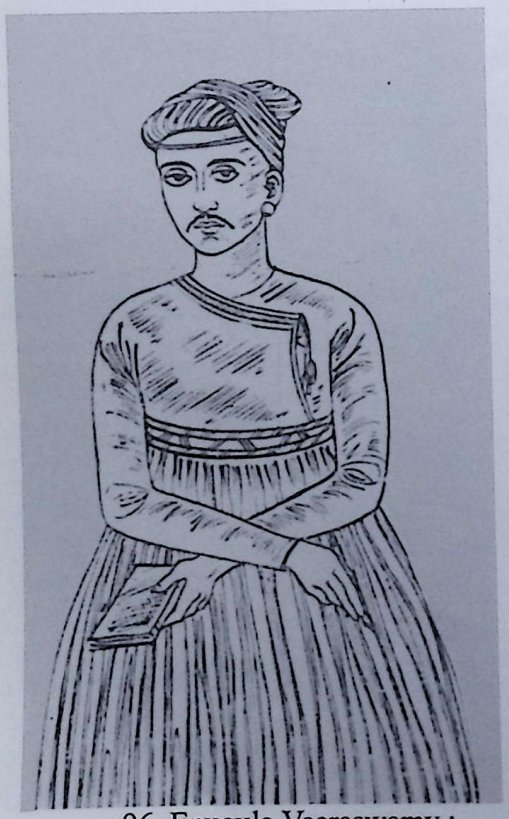
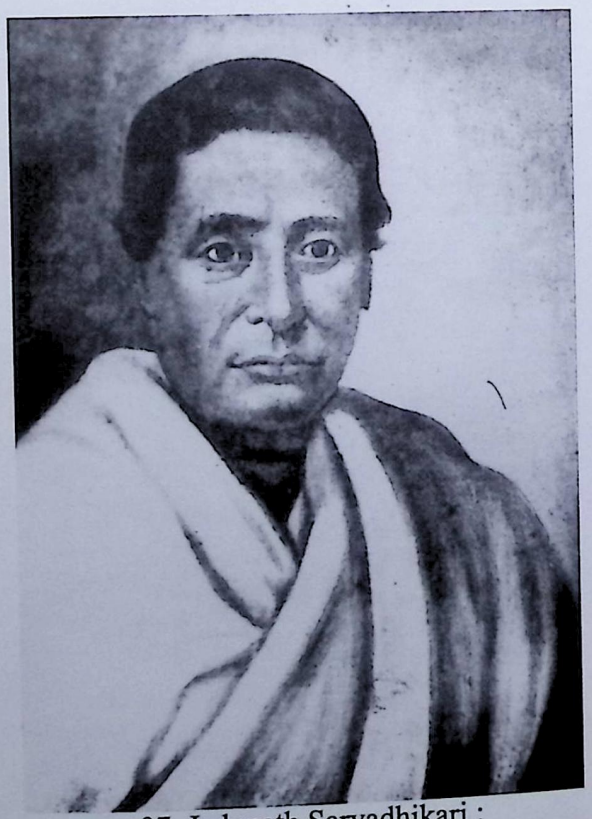
94. Bishop Reginald Heber :
a distinguished traveller & author



95. Rev. Bunyu Nanjo :
a Japanese traveller



96. Enugula Veeraswamy :
a traveller from Madras



97. Jadunath Sarvadhikari :
a traveller from Bengal

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Nihon Bukkyo Jinmei Jiten (*Who is Who in the Buddhist World of Japan*), p. 600, Hozokan, Kyoto, 1992.

31. *Ibid.*
32. Bunyu Nanjo—*Indo Kiko*, pp. 1-3, 30-34, Kyoto, 1887.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Sherring also wrote that the Europeans visited the Manmandir in large numbers, *Benares*, pp. 135-36.
35. Details of this observatory were published in *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. V : The Asiatic Society of Bengal.
36. Shusaku Endo, *Deep River* (*Fukai Kawa*), tr., Van C. Gessel, p. 135.

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CHAPTER XXII

THE CITY OF CITIES

MAJOR TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS RECAPITULATED

As proposed in the introductory chapter, an attempt has been made to present the different facets of Varanasi from 1781 to 1857 in the preceding chapters. Now, the major trends and developments with regard to those facets, as dealt with in the foregoing, will be recapitulated in brief so as to appreciate their implications in the history of Varanasi.

Varanasi, the oldest living city of the world, was introduced to the West in the Modern Age following its occupation by the British in 1781. The paintings and travelogues left by Europeans helped to familiarize Western people with the City as a traditional seat of Indian culture.

With a European presence from the beginning of British rule, the population of the City became more cosmopolitan. A modern layout with streets and buildings of a Western style was becoming common in the periphery of the City. Law and order remarkably improved with the introduction of new rules and regulations, and strict vigilance by the Government had a salutary impact on growth and development. Despicable social customs, like the burning of widows, were abolished. Trade and commerce flourished to a great extent, though prices inflated rapidly. Taxes imposed by the Government were growing heavier, while Government patronage in the field of industry was almost nil.

The postal system, though restricted, became regular. Transport and communication were improved with the introduction of the telegraph, construction of new roads and the appearance of the railway, steam-ferry, etc. Educational institutions were founded by the Government, Christian missionaries and Indians, as much to disseminate knowledge as to teach English, classical and modern Indian languages. Ideas from the West ushered in the age of reason and humanism, though these spread rather slowly through English education. The cultivation of Sanskrit through private seminaries and the composition of literary works in this language gained a momentum that had not been witnessed in the immediate preceding centuries.

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Indians were joined by Europeans in the study of Sanskrit and Indians, in turn, also undertook English studies. The introduction of the printing press further stimulated teaching and learning activities and enabled journalism to rouse the public consciousness.

Municipal awareness of the people as manifested through the Phatakbandi System, was already common and continued to prevail despite the Government's unfavourable attitude towards it. Hospitals, dispensaries and asylums for the handicapped were founded mainly by private individuals along modern lines and enjoyed Government patronage. Along with the newly introduced system of medicine, the traditional system of treatment also continued during this period. Public health and hygiene also received serious notice. Philanthropic activities, like the construction of ghats and the running of the dole-houses, were undertaken with renewed vigour by wealthy and munificent persons. People of different communities joined hands in developing and beautifying the City. In these ventures the Marathas and Bengalees took a leading role.

Confrontations between religious communities were dealt with sternly by the Government and the practice of religion now became free and open. The Hindus heaved a sigh of relief at the closure of the chapter of religious persecution by the Muslim rulers, and devoted themselves enthusiastically to the practice of their religion. In consequence, their temples multiplied and their fairs and festivals were celebrated with great eclat. Christianity appeared in the City as the religion of the new rulers. Hinduism faced a new challenge when the Christian missionaries opened missions in the City and initiated the process of conversion. Nevertheless, Hinduism continued to reign supreme and deeply influenced the City's life.

Different branches of both the fine arts and the performing arts were regularly cultivated, especially on occasions like the Budhwamangal. Contributions of both professional and amateur artistes and the patronization of the local Raja and the *rais* helped the growth and development of a distinctive Banarasi culture. Apart from the appearance of the Company School in the field of painting, European contact hardly left an impact on either the culture of fine arts or the performing arts, or on the habits of food and drink, dress and ornaments, sports, pastimes, etc., of the local people. The citizens, though normally amiable by nature, gave an account of their sturdiness and independent spirit by offering resistance to the Government when called for.

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IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CITY

Notwithstanding major developments in the nineteenth century of the kind we have just sketched, the question as to what extent these developments transformed the City during this period and whether they were a boon or a bane for Varanasi, has to be considered as well.

Fortunately, we have at least five contemporary accounts and reports left by three Indians namely, Niranjan Mukherjee,[1] Bholanauth Chunder[2] and Kashidas Mitra,[3] and two Britishers, Emma Roberts[4] and M. H. Sherring.[5] These authors dealt with this subject firsthand and left us observations which require careful examination. They arrived at the conclusion, which is also corroborated prima facie by the study of nineteenth century Varanasi, that the changes brought about by the British proved to be beneficial for Varanasi, particularly in the sectors of transport and communication, health and hygiene, social reforms, general administration and the like. Nevertheless, most of these authors give undue credit for all these changes to the British Government. For example, in the field of education and public health, institutions were set up primarily by private initiative and Government assistance came only later; hence, the British Government does not deserve full credit in this respect.

These authors, however, rightly contend that the British Government became instrumental in transforming Varanasi from a medieval city to a modern one by bringing about the changes detailed above. It is also remarkable that nearly five hundred years since Gahadavala rule, the City, under the British, developed such a milieu that not only revived its legendary culture, but reached even greater heights.

But British rule was not wholly a boon for either the City or India, since the British in India were basically imperialists bent on exploitation. The British Government levied numerous taxes and duties and extorted money from the people under various pretexts, though little of that money was invested in improvements for the City. The authorities even abolished a committee that had been set up to suggest, plan and oversee various improvements to the City shortly after its formation. The Government did not develop any local industry in line with the launch of the industrial revolution in Britain. On the contrary, its economic policies adversely affected the City's biggest and most important cottage industry, weaving. These activities exposed the fact that the purpose of the reforms introduced by the British was primarily the consolidation and extension of their power and empire, while the welfare of her subjects was but secondary.

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The initial identification of the British with the local people, their active interest in Indian tradition, as well as their friendly gestures towards the latter, degraded into strained relations within three to four decades of their occupation of India. This synchronized with the fact that British officials were becoming more and more conscious of their superior status as rulers of the land and at the same time more and more inclined to denounce the society, religion and culture of India, as being far inferior to those of Europe.

Moreoever, the much vaunted 'rule of law' introduced by the British into India was rife with flaws and anomalies. Genuine rule of law presupposes the twin principles of equity and equality, yet the British-introduced rule of law in India violated both these principles on various occasions and became a paradoxy. The dichotomy was that these laws were codified and administered to serve British colonial interests first. Consequently, this rule of law was shamelessly biased and discriminated in favour of British officers and civil population *vis-à-vis* their Indian counterparts. Here we may recall the incident already quoted in the chapter on Europeans when the mere *hookum* (order) of an English officer carried the authority of law in *Mofussil.*

In effect, the favouritism that Brahmins had once enjoyed under traditional Indian legal system had been substituted by British favouritism in the eyes of law in the new age. The Government never hesitated to sacrifice all sense of equity with regard to its Indian subjects when such judgements protected its imperialist designs. It is clear that while the British may have introduced their rule of law to modernize Indian administrative system, in practice the law was implemented to subdue their Indian subjects and prolong their sovereignty and systematic exploitation of India and her people.

Facts like these were glossed over by most of the above-mentioned authors. It is not surprising that the two British authors, Emma Roberts and M. H. Sherring (who was in addition a Christian missionary) would overlook, if not suppress, these facts since both were staunch advocates of British imperialism. But why should it be so in the case of the Indian authors Bholanauth Chunder and Niranjan Mukerjee? It is a question that no serious student of history can ignore. The answer, however, is not far to seek. The civilization and culture imported by the British dazzled the eyes of most English-educated Indians so much so that they forgot those old words of wisdom, 'all that glitters is not gold.' The insight and awareness required for understanding the dark side of British rule did not grow in

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most Indians, including the intelligentsia, till nearly the end of the nineteenth century.

A remarkable exception to this general trend of Indian intellectuals of the day is found in Kashidas Mitra, the editor of the *Kashivartaprakashika*. While the editor of this news magazine appreciated the British Government for removing Muslim tyrants from the throne of this country, restoring law and order, spreading education and enhancing the scope of employment, he, at the same time, vehemently criticized the negative aspects of English education, the support of the Christian missionaries by the Government, and above all, the Government's ruthless exploitation of its subjects. The editor even censured the Government as *dhanalobhi*, that is, a money-grubber.

Let us now turn to other controversial points. Sherring observed that Sanskrit studies greatly diminished in Varanasi in his time, but this is not wholly true with regard to the first half of the nineteenth century. Though not to the extent Sherring wanted us to believe, Sanskrit studies had, however, shown signs of decline since the third quarter of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, is it not also true that the culture of Sanskrit, hitherto confined within India, assumed a global character in this very century with the introduction of Sanskrit studies in quite a few Western universities and devoted pursuit by a host of Western scholars ? Appropriately, Varanasi played a significant role in this process of globalization of Sanskrit by attracting some of those scholars to its rich academic arena, which will be apparent from the study of chapter XII of the present work.

Most of the above-mentioned authors, including Bholanauth, decried Hinduism as a degenerate and superstitious religion of idolatry. Hinduism, they held, was decaying fast and would soon collapse like a house of cards, and hence, should be replaced by the superior religion of Christianity. Sherring, in his missionary zeal, went a step further by predicting that Christianity would make India great, urging that Varanasi take leadership in this respect by professing Christianity herself. That these were but the wild dreams of some Christian missionaries, Europeans and English-educated Indians, and that such dreams could not and would not materialize, became evident in later years.

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF VARANASI'S HISTORY

It appears that the persons referred to above and their like-minded

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contemporaries failed to recognize the real foundation and true sprit of the history of Varanasi, which epitomizes the history of India. The cornerstone of the history of Varanasi is the universal and broad-based spirituality of Hinduism that preaches, 'एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति'—'That which exists is one; though sages call it by various names'.[6] This universal spirit has given Varanasi such a moral strength and power of resilience that it could stand the test of time in a much more positive sense than what is generally appreciated. This City has not merely survived through the ages, it has accommodated new peoples and assimilated new ideas without being uprooted or superseded by them.

It is this spirit which not only saved Varanasi from near extinction during Muslim rule in the Medieval Age, but that which also recognized the many positive things that Islam had to offer. This same spirit of universality helped Varanasi to face the still more powerful challenges from the West in the Modern Age. In addition, the City gained considerably by its contact with the West, without allowing the latter to touch its heart or shake its foundations.

Foreign invasion, be it from Central Asia or from the West, has thus turned out to be a boon in disguise to this ancient City. With such a background, Varanasi has evolved a time-honoured device, a paradigm so to say of fourfold ideals namely, assimilation, harmony, material prosperity and spiritual excellence, by adopting which a culture, race or land would not only survive, but flourish. This is an ideal by which a world culture may grow, develop and prosper, and is, no doubt, a priceless contribution to the world from Varanasi.

VARANASI, THE CITY ETERNAL

Before we close, let us present below the special features of Varanasi in the light of discussions in this chapter as well as in the previous ones.

Varanasi is a city that possesses multifarious facets of great magnitude including a vast religious complex, comprehensive educational system, rich culture and sound economy.

Varanasi has been held in the highest esteem by a vast multitude of people over the ages. To them it has taken the honoured and singular position of a bounteous giver of both the enjoyments of this world and liberation from it. This explains why so many have resorted to it in the past and, hopefully, why many more will continue to do so in the future.

Varanasi is invincible because its spirit is indomitable, its vitality

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inexhaustible and its fabric unshakable. Consequently, the City has never been truly conquered, nor could it ever be conquered in terms of religion and culture.

The City, much to its credit, has also shown the wonderful ability of harmonizing opposing elements and bringing about unity in diversity. Its heritage has thrived on the flow of ideas from various streams of culture, both near and far, at different periods throughout history. It is, thus, ancient, yet modern; individual, yet universal; and above all, local, yet global.

Finally, the City cannot be limited by time, for it is eternal.[7] As is strongly believed, time and space-bound Varanasi is but the manifestation of an eternal Varanasi. The history of Varanasi during the modern period, like that of any other period of its existence, is the saga of the manifestation of this eternal Varanasi. Thus, this City is also immanent, yet transcendental, the mystery of which may be comprehended only by deep introspection.

These noble attributes have made Varanasi, the City of Shiva, dear and venerable to all, both gods and human beings, and have won for it an exalted position among all the cities, past and present, of the globe.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Niranjan Mukherjee, *Bharatavarshiya Rajdarpan*, 'What has Banaras derived from the British occupation', Part II.
2. Bholanauth Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo*, pp. 281-83.
3. Kashidas Mitra, the editor of the *Kashivartaprakashika*, observed this view in various issues of his periodical.
4. Emma Roberts, *Hindostan*, Vol. II, pp. 60-63.
5. Rev. M.A. Sherring, *Benares*, pp. 344-60.
6. 1st *Mandala*, 164th *Sukta*, *Rigveda*.
7. '...That effulgent form, the embodiment of spiritual emotions, is its (Varanasi's) eternal nature. And what is seen outside is its shadow.'—Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master*, Swami Jagadananda, tr., Vol. II, fifth edition, p. 649; Observation of Mahamahopadhyay Gopinath Kaviraj on the physical Varanasi and the real eternal Varanasi, quoted: Dr Bhanushankar Metha, *Adrishta Varanasi* (the unseen Varanasi), Kaushal Kumar Ray, ed., *Uttar Pradesh Kashi Ank*, p. 56.

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GLOSSARY

Abhishek (Abhiṣeka) : a ceremony in which the deity is given a ritualistic bath

Āchār : a sauce; pickle

Āchāra : code of conduct

Ādālut/Ādālat : court of justice

Ākāshdeep (Ākāśadīpa): a lamp fixed on a lofty pole under the sky in honour of ancestors/gods

Ākhāḍā : wrestling school, meeting-place

Akrajaut : contingencies

Ālim : a Muslim learned man

Āmeer : a rich person

Āmil : a revenue collecting officer

Anadhyāya : no study

Anāsakti : a detached outlook

Annakooṭ (Annakūṭa) : a huge amount of cooked rice and other food stuff offered to the deity on special occasions

Antargṛha : inner zone

Āpaṇa : shop

Ārātrikam : ritualistic worship by waving a lighted lamp circularly around the idol

Arpaṇnāmā : trust

Artha : wealth; the second end of human life

Āshrafi : gold coin

Āṭṭāh : flour

Āttar : perfumery

Āumeeny : pertaining to an Āmin (an inspector; officer of the court entrusted with outside work; sub-ordinate revenue collecting officer)

Āyurveda : the Indian traditional system of medicine growing out of the Atharvaveda and first outlined in the auxiliaries of the Vedas

Baḍi : big

Bābā : a word of respect and love used for an ascetic or an old person

Bāḍi : house/building

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Bāhādur	:	valiant; title conferred by the British Government to Indian chiefs or nobles
Bajrā	:	a large roofed boat
Bājrā	:	Indian millet
Bakshy	:	a high government official during the Muslim regime in India
Banāras Gharānā	:	a typical tradition of music set up by the famous musicians of Vārāṇasī
Bānkā	:	prize fighters well known for their physical strength and haughtiness
Bhānḍs	:	class of commedians who entertained people by their jests and humourous songs
Bhāng	:	hemp
Bhauliā	:	a type of house boat
Bhāvasamādhi	:	ecstasy in which the devotee retains his ego and enjoys communion with the Personal God
Bhūmihār	:	a caste among the Hindus
Bichhuā	:	a kind of small knife of about six inches in length and tapered to a fine point
Bighā	:	a measurement of land
Brahman	:	the Supreme Reality
Budmushee	:	wickedness
Buneāh	:	moneylenders
Burkundāze	:	body of constables
Chakra	:	wheel
Chachauḍi	:	a mixed dish of curry consisting of many vegetables not too dry, not too watery and a little hot
Chāmara	:	a fan made of yak-tail used in the temple service
Chandāla	:	one belonging to the lowest stratum of Hindu society
Chāpāṭi	:	a kind of thin and circular hand-made bread
Chatuṣpāṭhī	:	Sanskrit school
Chhānā	:	a Bengali sweetmeat made of cheese (cottage-cheese)
Chowkidār	:	sentinel; constable
Chowk	:	a public market-place where shops of various articles & commodities are situated
Chowki	:	outpost; small custom-house
Chuprāssee (Chāprāsī)	:	an orderly; an office messenger
Cuchery	:	office or court
Cuchchā (Kuchchā)	:	mud-built or unmetalled

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Daftur	:	an office; secretariat
Dakṣiṇā	:	an offering made with money especially to priests, the preceptor, etc.
Dāl	:	pulses
Damaru	:	a kind of small tabour shaped like an hour-glass and played by moving it in one hand
Dāna	:	gifts that are given at funeral ceremonies or other similar occasions
Dāṇḍī	:	boatman
Daṇḍī (Daṇdee)	:	a sect of sannyāsīs who always carry a staff
Darbha grass	:	a kind of sacred grass (Kuśa) used in sacrificial ceremonies
Dargāh	:	tomb
Darśana	:	philosophy; to see
Daśanāmī	:	a monastic order founded by Śaṅkarāchārya, the great Hindu monk and philosopher
Dawk	:	an established system of conveying letters
Dārogāh	:	an inspector of police
Dāyabhāga	:	a legal treatise on the division of ancestral property, composed by Jimutavāhana
Devīpakṣa	:	a fortnight ascribed to the Goddess
Devanāgarī script	:	a script in which Sanskrit is written
Devottara land	:	a property endowed for defraying the cost of worshipping a deity and holding religious ceremonies
Dewān Khānāh	:	a hall of audience
Dewānny Ādālat	:	civil court
Dhānguḍ	:	a tribe whose occupation was generally digging of wells and tanks
Dharārā (Dharaharā)	:	a turret/minaret
Dharma	:	religion; religious and moral duty; the first end of human life
Dharmaśālā	:	a pilgrim lodge
Dharmaśāstra	:	part of the sacred writing dealing with the rules of conduct, morality and social law
Dhoti	:	the wearing cloth of a Hindu man—the lower garment
Dhurnā	:	a practice adopted by male Brahmins to redress grievances by sitting in front of the house of the person from whom redress is sought
Digambara	:	a class of ascetic who is 'sky-clad'; a major Jaina sect

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Dīpāvalī (Dīwālī)	:	a religious festival of illumination held in the month of Kārtika
Diwān (Dewān)	:	minister
Divya	:	swearing
Doputtāh	:	scarf of silk or muslin often with gold or silver threads
Durbār (Darbār)	:	an audience chamber
Dusserā (Dasserā)	:	a Hindu festival
Dvāra	:	gate
Ekkāh	:	a two wheeled vehicle drawn by one horse
Ekrārnāmāh	:	a deed; a contract
Farmān	:	a warrant; a royal mandate
Faquir (Fakir)	:	a Hindu or Mohammedan religious mendicant
Fouzdāry Ādālat	:	a criminal court
Fussilee year	:	agricultural year, the year originated with Emperor Akbar—it is 592 years back of the Christian era.
Futwāh	:	to pass order or to issue a decree
Gaṅgājulli	:	an act of swearing in the court by taking the water of the Gaṅgā in one's palm
Gaṅgāputras	:	sons of the river Gaṅgā—a title claimed by certain families of priests and religious guides of Vārāṇasī
Gauriyā (Guriyā)	:	clay hookkā
Ghaḍikhānā	:	clock room
Gharry	:	horse-drawn cart
Ghāṭ/Ghāuṭ	:	a segment of river frontage : a place often with steps providing access to the river
Ghāṭiyā	:	a specialist who sits on the ghat of a river to perform various sacred ritual functions for pilgrims and bathers
Gherāo	:	an act of enclosing or surrounding; besiegement
Ghurrā (Ghaḍā)	:	pitcher
Gomastāh	:	an agent or representative
Guṇa	:	one of the three component qualities of the five elements of which the universe is made
Gurudhāma	:	the abode of preceptor
Gurumandira	:	the temple of preceptor
Hakeem	:	a learned man; a physician practising the Islamic system of medicine
Hākim	:	a high administrative officer and/or judge
Hārem	:	women's quarters in a Mohammedan rich man's house

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Hāvildār	:	sergeant
Hekimi	:	practice of Muslim system of medicine
Homa	:	fire sacrifice
Hookāh/Hookkā	:	hubble-bubble
Hookum	:	an order
Hookumnāmāh	:	a written order; a writ of command
Hoolee/Holi	:	the spring festival of coloured powder/water
Hurbur chettra	:	fair on the Gaṅgā.
Hurtāl	:	closure of shops in order to redress grievances
Ishtihār	:	a circular; communique
Īśvara	:	Personal God
Jalasamādhi	:	cremation of a monk at the waters of a holy river like the Gaṅgā
Jāgeer (Jāghīr)	:	a piece of land assigned by the state to a person in appreciation or in expectation of some service
Jāgīrdār	:	the holder of the jaghir
Jākāt	:	Muhammedan law
Jāmā	:	upper garment
Jari	:	the thread of gold or silver
Jātaka	:	tales of Lord Buddha's previous births
Jemādār	:	a head of soldiers / a person on guard
Jhil	:	a large pond
Jilāpi/jilebi	:	a kind of sweetmeat
Jinnes	:	a mark of holy order and dignity not in its usual place (forehead), but on ear or other part of the body
Jīva	:	an embodied soul
Kābāb	:	roasted meat
Kāchhāri/Cutcherry	:	office or court
Kāma	:	lust; the desire of pleasure—one of the four ends of human life
Kāṅgālī	:	indigent
Karma Kāṇda	:	ritualistic worship; work portion of the Vedas
Kartā	:	master
Kaṣaṇa	:	to shine
Kathak	:	a professional reciter of stories from the Purāṇas in an assembly; a class of musicians
Katthak	:	a form of Indian classical dance
Kāṭrā	:	a market-place surrounded by a wall
Kavirāja	:	traditional Hindu physician
Kāvya	:	poetical works

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Kāyastha	:	a caste in Hindu society usually employed in professions which demand intelligence and learning
Kāzi/Qāzi	:	a Muslim judge
Khaḍībolī Hindī	:	standard Hindi dialect spoken near Delhi, in which modern prose is written
Khaini	:	a quid (of tobacco)
Khandam	:	a part; division
Khaṭik	:	a caste selling vegetables
Khelāt/Khilāt	:	an award of title given with a dress of honour in appreciation of some special quality/service of a person
Khir	:	milk thickened by boiling
Khoā	:	solidified milk, or cream
Khureetā	:	a pocket; a pouch
Kinkhāb	:	the famous indigenous fabric made of gold and silver
Kirānā	:	grocery
Kodo	:	a small grain usually eaten by poor people
Koor	:	circular pile of wood for conflagration
Koṭhi	:	house; a business house
Kotwāl	:	the chief police officer in a town/city
Kotwālī	:	headquarters of police
Kroḍapatra	:	supplement of a deed/ book or magazine
Kṣatriya	:	the warrior class among the Hindus
Kulīna	:	a marked class of Brahmins, claiming superiority to other Brahmins
Kuṇda	:	sacred pool
Lāddu	:	a sweet made of ghee, sugar and powdered pulse
Laṅgar Khānā	:	a place offering free food
Liṅgam	:	the emblem of Lord Śiva, generally made of stone with round shape
Lingua franca	:	state or official language
Lui	:	winter cloth
Mahāsamādhi	:	the passing away of a great soul
Mahājan	:	a money lender
Mahallā/Muhallā	:	neighbourhood/ a locality
Mājee (Mājhi)	:	helmsman; boatman
Mandī	:	market
Mandir	:	temple
Mānmandir	:	an observatory

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Mantra	:	a sacred word or sound to be uttered in connection with rituals or as a part of spiritual practice
Maṭha/Maṭh	:	monastery; a temple; a hermitage; a centre of religious preaching
Māyā	:	ignorance obscuring the vision of God; the cosmic illusion
Melā	:	a fair
Merwā	:	a kind of basil
Mitākṣarā	:	the annotation of the Smriti of Yājñyavalkya by Vijñāneśwara; a legal system
Mlechchha	:	a term of reproach applied by the orthodox Hindus to foreigners, who do not conform to the established norms of Hindu religion and society
Mohurrir	:	court-clerk
Mokṣa	:	liberation from the repeated cycles of birth and death; one of the four ends of human pursuit
Mollāh Korānee	:	an art of swearing in Muslim witnesses in court by touching the holy Koran by a Muslim priest
Mandalī	:	society
Moonshy (Munshī)	:	an Urdu teacher / a private secretary
Moulavī/Maulavī	:	Mohammedan scholar or teacher
Muchlekāh	:	a recognizance; a bond
Mufti	:	an expounder of Mohammedan laws
Mukeāh/Mukhiyā	:	a headman
Mukteer	:	an agent; an attorney; a legal practitioner
Mutsuddi	:	a deputy or agent or a commercial agent
Naresh (Nareśa)	:	a king, a chief
Nāgari script	:	script in which Hindi is written
Nāib/Nāeb	:	an administrator and rent collector; deputy
Nāik	:	a soldier holding the lowest non-commissioned rank
Nauṭanki	:	dancing girls
Nautch/Nāch	:	dance
Nāṭmandir	:	a hall in front of a temple for devotional dancing and musical performances where devotees usually sit
Naubatkhānā	:	a raised platform from where music, especially Shehnāi, is played
Nazar	:	to keep an eye on; a gift
Nāzul	:	a plot of land lying in or near a property belonging to the government
Nirvāṇa	:	final absorption in Brahman or the Supreme Reality by the annihilation of the individual ego

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Pādree	:	a Christian priest
Pādukā	:	footwear
Pakkā Mahal	:	a quarter of stone or brick-built building/mansions
Pakki	:	final
Panchakrośī Yātrā	:	a holy circuit with a radius of about five krośas (10 miles or 16 kilometers)
Pān	:	betel
Panchāyet	:	village council
Pandā	:	a pilgrim guide; a priest
Pandit	:	scholar; a learned man
Panditāin	:	wife of a pandit
Pāriāh	:	a social out-caste
Pārvatīya Brahmin	:	a Brahmin belonging to the hilly areas of the Himalayas
Parwānnāh	:	a warrant; a written order
Paṭa	:	a plate or piece of cloth for painting
Pāṭhaśālā	:	a primary school; a Sanskrit academy
Paṭṭavastra	:	an attire of woven silk or coloured cloth used during special occasions; a metal plaque with figures of chosen Deities carved on it
Paurāṇik	:	belonging to the past; connected with Hindu mythology
Phāṭak	:	gate
Phāṭakbandī System	:	a popular arrangement of city sections and self-administration
Pinis	:	a type of boat used in river communication
Punthi	:	manuscript
Prāyaśchitta	:	a custom, prescribed by the scriptures, to punish and purify an offender committing unethical or irreligious acts
Prāyopaveśana	:	lying before the deity without taking food
Purāṇa	:	books of Hindu mythology
Purātan Durgābāḍi	:	an old site of worship of the Goddess Durgā
Purdāh	:	the practice inaugurated by Muslims that involves the seclusion of women from public eyes
Rāga	:	six principal modes of Indian classical music; melody structure
Rais	:	aristocrat
Rājaguru	:	a spiritual guide or preceptor of a king
Rākṣasa	:	a demon

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Rānī	:	queen; an epithet awarded by people to a munificent female zamindār
Rattam	:	a climbing palm
Rāzināmāh	:	an agreement
Ressāllā	:	a garment made of silk
Rāyats	:	residents
Sādhu	:	a holy man; a sage
Sahagamana	:	to go together; the act of dying or burning oneself to death on the husband's funeral pyre
Sāhitya	:	literature
Sakarkand	:	a kind of sweet potato
Sākhī	:	poem
Salaam	:	salutation
Śālagrāma	:	rounded stone used in worship as symbolizing the living presence of Vishnu (Viṣṇu)
Śāl Dośālā	:	costly garment made of silk
Saṁsāra	:	the impermanent world into which individual souls are repeatedly born and die
Saṁgīta	:	songs
Śāstra	:	scriputre
Śāstrārtha	:	debates and disputations on the scriptures
Sanātana Dharma	:	eternal Hindu Religion formulated by the ṛṣis (seers) of the Vedas
Sannyāsa	:	the monastic life; the last of the four stages of Hindu life
Sannyāsī	:	an all-renouncing Hindu monk
Samādhi	:	ecstasy; a state of concentration induced by meditation; a super-conscious state
Saṁkalpa	:	a vow; a strong desire
Sāṁkhya	:	one of the six darśanas, or classical schools of Indian Philosophy
Sardār	:	chief; captain; leader
Satī	:	a chaste woman; a women who burns herself with her husband on the same funeral pyre
Sarovar	:	a large pond/lake
Saṭhiā	:	occultist
Satra	:	doles house
Sawār	:	rider / mounted police
Serishtādār	:	an office superintendent
Shiāh	:	one of the two major sects of Islam rejecting the

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first three Caliphs and holding Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad as his successor

Shroff : banker

Siccā : an obsolete rupee-coin in India

Sipāhi : a sepoy; an armed guard

Sitrengee/Shatranji : a kind of carpet; a chess-board

Śivaliṅga : a phallic symbol of Śiva

Smṛti : codes of traditional law guiding the daily life and conduct of Hindus

Subāhdār : an army officer holding the rank equivalent to that of a captain

Sphotic : the study of the impressions produced upon the mind by sounds

Śrāddha : an obsequial ceremony in honour of the departed souls of relatives, so named as it is performed with 'śraddhā' (faith and respect)

Subā : province; administrative division of a country

Śūdra : the fourth caste of Hindu society

Sunni : the larger of the two major sects of Islam that adheres to the orthodox tradition of the Sunnā, acknowledging the first four Caliphs as rightful successors of Prophet Muhammad

Sunnud/Sanad : a deed of grant

Suṣumnā : one of the most prominent nerves, running through the centre of the spinal column and extending from the base of the spine to the brain and through which the awakened spiritual energy flows

Śvetāmbara : a sect of the Jainas

Swāmī : lord; a title given to ascetics, especially monks belonging to the Vedānta school

Tabaliā : player of tablā—an Indian drum

Talab : an order to come

Talāo/Tālāb : pond

Tantra : a system of religious philosophy presenting God as the Divine Mother and prescribing elaborate and often esoteric rituals

Tapasyā : religious austerity

Tāluk : a tract of proprietary land, or landed estate consisting of several villages

Tawāif : a professional female musician; a dancing girl

Ṭānkśāl : mint house

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Ṭāṭṭoo	:	pony
Thānā	:	police station
Thāniā	:	police constable
Ṭīkā	:	commentary
Tīrtha	:	place of pilgrimage; holy place
Tīrthaṅkara	:	Jaina law giver
Tody (Tāḍi)	:	tribal drink
Ṭol/Toal	:	private academy of Sanskrit
Toon	:	a small piece of steel having fine sharp edge
Tulasī	:	plant sacred to Vishnu
Tulbannāh	:	quibble or false pretext
Tussildār/Tehsildār	:	revenue collector
Uḍāni	:	upper garment
Upaniṣad	:	knowledge portion of the Vedas, to be studied by sitting near the Preceptor
Urzee (Ārzee)	:	petition
Vādya	:	music
Vaidya	:	a physician of the traditional Hindu system of medicine
Vaiśya	:	the merchant and cultivator class in ancient Hindu society
Vakālatnāmāh	:	power of attorney
Vakeel/Vakil	:	a pleader; an advocate; an authorized agent
Vānaprasthī	:	a person in the third stage of life practising renunciation away from family life
Varṇa	:	a caste
Varṇāśrama	:	*Varṇa* : any of the four primary social groups according to qualifications and vocations, viz., Brāhmaṇa (priests, teachers and law-makers), Kṣatriya (warriors and kings), Vaiśya (traders, bankers, industrialists and farmers) and Śūdra (labourers) *Āśrama* : one of the four stages of life, viz., Brahmacharya (the celibate student stage), Gārhasthya (the married householder's stage), Vānaprastha (the stage of retirement and contemplation), and Sannyāsa (the stage of religious mendicancy)
Vāyu (devatā)/(koṇa)	:	the wind-god/the north-west
Vilva	:	wood apple

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Vrajabhāṣā	:	a dialect of Western Hindi noted for its poetic literature
Vyākaraṇa	:	grammar
Vyāsa Kāśī	:	the town set up by the sage Vyāsa and the town situated on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā, opposite Vārāṇasī
Vyāpārī	:	trader or merchant
Vyavasthā	:	verdict given by pandits on socio-religious issues
Yajña	:	Vedic sacrifice
Yakṣa	:	class of demi-gods who are ascribed as attendants of Kuvera, the god of riches; spirits dwelling in trees and woods
Yātrā	:	pilgrimage; an indigenous dramatic entertainment accompanied by a large number of songs
Yoga	:	union of the individual soul and the Universal Soul; also the method by which this union is realized
Yogī	:	one who is adept in meditation on God; one who has realized God/the Self
Zamindār (Zemindār)	:	landlord
Zardā	:	preparation of tobacco to be chewed with betel leaves
Zenānā	:	harem; feminine

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–Rabindranath Tagore

The author is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order with its Headquarters at Belur Math, West Bengal, India and was formerly the Principal of the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira (a residential three year degree college). He is presently President of the Vedanta Society of Japan.

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ISBN 81-87332-18-2

9788187332183

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"The present work is motivated by an enquiry into and an investigation of an age, the 'father' of our immediate past–the Banaras which gave birth to its post Mutiny culture and life-style…It assumes a newer dimension as the author has drawn copiously upon Indian sources of those times, usually neglected by other authors…The author's untiring efforts in going through Government records…give us a more detailed account of the foundation and early growth of such institutions in the City (Sanskrit College, etc.)…This mosaic of information creates a holistic picture of the City.

We are confident that this book will continue to serve as a beacon light to future researchers on Banaras, as it is a source of great delight and inspiration to us Banarasis." *(Excerpts from the Foreword)*

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"This prodigious work ranks with the most important books that have been written on the holy cities of Jerusalem, Rome, Mecca, Medina, the Imperial City of the Chinese Empire, and Kyoto. Its exhaustive scholarship is matched only by the love that pulls the book together and shines through its every chapter."

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ISBN 81-87332-18-2

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